CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE

Charrette on Housing Two Million in the Greater Toronto Area by 2021

Proceedings

Urban Focus Series 90-7

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Charrette on Housing Two Million in the Greater Toronto Area by 2021

Proceedings

Charrette is a French word meaning cart. The use of the word to denote a round-the-clock study to meet a very tight deadline evolved at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris where deadlines were set by the schedule of the cart that called to collect completed projects. Charrette is now an architectural term referring to a study or project performed within the framework of a tight deadline.

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90-7 Housing Two Million in the Greater Toronto Area by 2021

Proceedings of a workshop organized by the Canadian Urban Institute and held on December 4-7, 1990.

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Executive Summary

The Canadian Construction Research Board sponsored this charrette on housing intensification — "Housing Two Million: Urban Solutions" — to contribute to the discussions about the desirable urban form of the Toronto region as it accommodates a 50 percent increase from its present population of four million during the next 30 years.

The charrette took place over two and a half days beginning the morning of December 5 and completed in the early morning hours of December 7. Over 80 people were involved in the preparation of written and graphic materials during that period. This report was produced on site during the charrette.

The charrette focused on redevelopment of available sites within the present built-up area as providing the potential for housing larger numbers of people in a more cost-effective and environmentally and socially acceptable manner than other forms of housing intensification. The specific focus was on larger sites because the potential of smaller sites has already been given substantial attention by planners and policy-makers particularly with respect to possible redevelopment along the main streets of Metropolitan Toronto.

Participants in the charrette served on one or another of three teams. One team considered ideas and proposals for redeveloping the Greenwood Raceway. Another team concerned itself with two shopping centres: Pickering Town Centre and the Downsview Plaza. The third team explored the general issues of policy and legislation associated with this kind of housing intensification.

The team that considered redevelopment of the Greenwood race track paid special attention to minimizing environmental impacts and to benefitting the surrounding neighbourhood by the addition of community facilities. The team proposed five broad options for mixed-use redevelopment of the site with the residential component providing between 4,000 and 7,500 housing units, and the typical building height ranging from four to six stories. A major feature of all options was the diagonal joining of Lakeshore Boulevard to Kingston Road both to provide ready pedestrian access from the development to the lake and to reduce through traffic in the local streets of the new neighbourhood. The financial analysis indicated that redevelopment is entirely feasible, but the team felt that the details require further refinement before they were released.

The team dealing with shopping centres reviewed the challenges and opportunities associated with redevelopment of the Pickering Town Centre and concluded that housing intensification should be achieved by turning the site into a 'village centre.' The team proposed keeping the existing commercial buildings and substantially covering the vast area of the parking lot with mainly residential buildings containing

a total of 1,180 units of which 540 would be designed for families. The total cost would be $310 million, which includes $94 million for replacing much of the surface parking with underground parking, and $74 million for adding additional commercial space.

The team proposed that the Downsview Plaza be demolished and the site be completely redeveloped to accommodate mainly residential uses with some commercial and institution functions as well. A total of 720 housing units would be provided of which most would be large enough for families. The total cost of redevelopment would be just under $100 million, including some $15 million specifically for the commercial and institutional components.

The policy team considered six key policy areas: environment, transportation, economy, social, urban structure, and mixed use. For each area, the team set out what can be achieved and what must be done to make it happen. The team concluded by noting the importance of strong political leadership and commitment and the special role of the Ontario government in making housing intensification happen.

The conclusion is that housing intensification through the redevelopment of large sites is feasible, can meet major environmental objectives, and is capable of enhancing the livability of both immediate neighbourhoods and the region as a whole.

Part 1: Introduction

Chapter 1: About the Charrette

The population of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which comprises Metropolitan Toronto and the regional municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel and York, will rise from four to six million between now and 2021.

Alternative urban forms to accommodate the growth are being debated. The emerging consensus among policy-makers in the GTA is that the growth should be accommodated in a way that minimizes the use of land beyond the present built-up area.

The urban sprawl (low density development in the regions surrounding Metropolitan Toronto) that has characterized urban growth in the last two decades is no longer seen as a viable alternative on economic, environmental, and social grounds. All other alternative scenarios will involve substantial growth in Metropolitan Toronto and perhaps also in existing centres in the surrounding regions. This means development or redevelopment at higher residential densities than has been customary – a process known as *housing intensification*.

The charrette on housing intensification in the Greater Toronto Area was organized by the Canadian Urban Institute in cooperation with Corporate Events Management Ltd. It was initiated and sponsored by the Canadian Construction Research Board.

The construction industry wanted to make a contribution to the discussion and debates about intensification. The charrette provided an opportunity for the industry to demonstrate, with creativity and sensitivity, that anticipated population growth can be housed in already built-up areas of the GTA without compromising the environmental, social or other key characteristics of the urban fabric.

The Toronto area has been seen as being ahead of its problems. But recently, residents of this region have developed the justifiable view that Toronto is falling behind. The charrette was designed to help governments and others regain control over the GTA's future.

The focus of the charrette was on one particular kind of housing intensification – redevelopment or partial redevelopment of existing built-up sites. Larger sites were the particular focus because redevelopment of smaller sites – such as that involved in main street intensification – has already been given much attention.

The case for considering larger sites is set out in more detail in the next chapter, which also describes how the three selected sites were chosen and how responsibility for developing ideas and proposals for the three sites, and for dealing with general policy issues, was shared among the three teams of the charrette.

Chapter 2: Housing Intensification in the GTA

Housing Another Two Million in the GTA by 2021

Demographic changes in the Greater Toronto Area parallel the changes in Ontario and Canada, which have been documented extensively.[1] The most important changes for housing policy are the growing population, the declining average household size, and the increasing number of types of households.

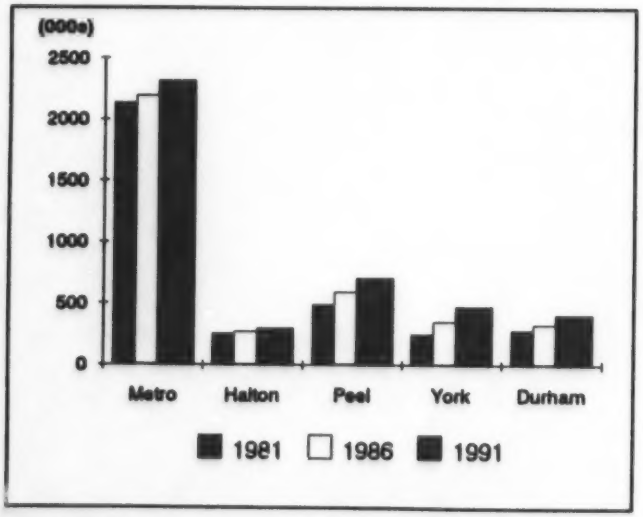


FIGURE 1: Population Growth in the GTA, 1981-1991

For fifty years, the GTA has been the fastest growing urban region in Canada. Its population has increased from one million to four million. In 1940, Toronto was a regional centre accounting for about 8 percent of Canada's population, mostly living within the boundaries of the City of Toronto. Today, the urbanized area of the GTA stretches from Burlington to Oshawa and north to Newmarket. It accounts for about 15 percent of Canada's population. This urbanized area is six times larger than in 1945. Thus, since the 1940s, urban growth in the GTA has mostly been in the form of low-density development.

Households Will Decline in Size and Diversify in Type

Household size, household diversity, and age structure will be markedly different in 2021.[2]

The typical family in the GTA has changed dramatically in the last two decades. In 1986, average household size in Metropolitan Toronto was 2.6 persons; in the surrounding regions it was 3.1 persons. Decreased fertility rates and the increasing independence of seniors will result in even smaller households. Statistics Canada projects that by 2011 household size will decline to 2.4 in Metro and 2.7 in the GTA as a whole, thereby increasing the demand for housing beyond what has been required to accommodate similar population growth. The diversity of households is growing. One factor is the divorce rate with the resulting growth in single-parent households.[3]

In the last 15 years, the housing supply has been dominated by single-family detached units, but the

demand has been increasing for smaller residential units.[4] The trend towards smaller and more diverse households is expected to continue, and thus the challenge of housing the two million more people by 2021 cannot be met *only* by continued construction of traditional single family homes.

The GTA's Population Will Continue to Grow

Population projections made by the Ontario Ministry of Treasury and Economics suggest that by 2011, the population of Metropolitan Toronto will grow by 375,000 persons, and that of the four surrounding regions will grow by about 1.2 million.[5] By 2021, the population of the GTA is expected to exceed 6 million, 2 million more than at present.[6]

Provincial Policy for the GTA

Recent actions of the Ontario government indicate a commitment to manage the growth of the GTA more vigorously and systematically than in the recent past. The first step was the establishment of two new agencies, the Greater Toronto Coordinating Committee (GTCC) and the Office of the Greater Toronto Area (OGTA). The second step was taken by the new government elected September 6th this year: a cabinet minister was appointed to oversee the work of these GTA agencies. In 1989 the two new agencies launched a process to counter urban sprawl in the GTA, although not by producing a formal plan for the area. Thus, intensification is emerging as a likely provincial policy for the GTA.

IBI Urban Structure Concepts Study

The GTCC commissioned a study to inquire into the potential benefits, requirements and risks of three urban forms.[7]

The study was carried out by the IBI Group and a number of other consulting firms. It was released in June 1990. Consistent with the provincial government's preference for coordination and cooperation, the IBI report was not represented as a planning study and it did not make recommendations. What it did do was provide systematic information about the implications of various growth options. The report was positioned to stimulate public discussion that might produce widespread agreement as to how growth in the region should be managed.

Three scenarios were considered in the study: spread, nodal and central. For each, 2011 population was set at 5,459,000 and the 2021 population at 6,020,000 following the projections of Ministry of Treasury and Economics.

Spread

Spread is the 'business as usual concept.' It represents the continuation of sprawl in the regions surrounding Metropolitan Toronto, with concentration of office development in downtown Toronto and in various subcentres in the GTA.

1986		METRO	HALTON	PEEL	YORK	DURHAM
Area (000s acres)		152.0	45.4	74.1	64.8	49.2
Population 1986 (000s)		2,193	271	592	351	326
Employment (000s)		1,351	119	305	170	137
2011						
SPREAD	Population	2,358	497	1,080	851	673
	Employment	1,686	245	593	457	280
	Additional Area	0	39.3	55.2	78.7	50.1
CENTRAL	Population	3,310	362	794	517	455
	Employment	2,046	203	445	293	253
Additional Area		0	16.3	24.2	25.3	21.6
NODAL	Population	2,626	464	1,050	703	595
	Employment	1,750	240	601	383	288
	Additional Area	0	18.1	35.8	33.2	28.8

TABLE 1: Population and Employment Assumptions of the IBI Study for 2011.

Source: IBI Group. 1990. *Greater Toronto Area Urban Structure Concepts Study. Background Report* No.1
Figures are compiled and calculated from Exhibits 5, 9 and 11.

Central

Central describes a concept in which most of the additional growth in population and employment occurs within the central parts of the GTA, particularly in Metropolitan Toronto.

Nodal

Nodal is an intermediate concept in which the growth of population and employment occurs mostly in and around existing communities in a compact form, with a consequent lower rate of consumption of undeveloped land relative to the spread concept.

Results

The concepts were evaluated on 42 criteria. Of the three concepts, central received the best rating on 22 of the criteria, spread on six and nodal on six. No concept was ahead on eight criteria. Nodal was often in second place overall. One important criterion that did not distinguish among the concepts concerned the cumulative cost of physical infrastructure (close to $80 million by 2021 in each case).[8]

These results lay the groundwork for a comprehensive planning study of the growth options for the GTA.

The IBI study has been criticized chiefly for its assumptions about population. Some have argued that the projected populations for 2011 and 2021 are too high — mostly because immigration will be lower than

anticipated on account of declining attractiveness of Canada and the GTA. Others have said the projected populations are too low — mostly because immigration will be higher on account of millions of "environmental refugees" who will stream into the region from a desiccated mid-west.

What is Housing Intensification?

For the purposes of the charrette housing intensification was defined as residential development of a site at a density that is substantially higher (i.e., high enough to support public transit) than has been customary for that kind of site.

Housing intensification entered the vocabulary of policy, planning, and development only in the 1980s. It has been generally used as an overarching term to describe various housing *forms* used to increase the number of housing units in a community. These forms typically involve the following: conversion of single-family houses to multiple-unit houses, infill or subdivision of existing residential development, redevelopment of sites with obsolete land uses, and changing zoning bylaws to allow higher densities in suburban development. These forms can be described more precisely as follows.

Conversion: increasing the number of households that can be accommodated in detached or semi-detached single-family grade-related dwellings through renovation or additions or both.[9]

Infill: the construction of new housing on vacant or underutilized sites in serviced residential areas in a form that is physically integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood.[10]

Redevelopment: the creation of new housing units through the redevelopment of currently underutilized sites (whose uses may be obsolete) in already built-up and serviced districts.

Adaptive Reuse: the creation of new housing within buildings originally designated or used for non-residential purposes.[11]

Suburban Densification: increasing densities in new subdivisions through subdivision control to achieve smaller lot sizes.

Redevelopment has significant potential to accommodate substantial growth. Redevelopment or partial redevelopment of shopping malls and plazas, obsolete industrial sites, office parks, university campuses, for example, can significantly increase housing stock in the GTA.

Why Focus on Redevelopment?

Housing infill, adaptive reuse, and conversion have been on the public policy agenda for a decade. In the early part of the 1980s, many Canadian studies were

initiated to address the feasibility of meeting housing needs through infill, reuse, and conversion through these forms of housing intensification.[12]

The studies, and the projects carried out, were largely responses to local conditions. They did not address regional concerns.

Now there is growing agreement among professionals, policymakers, and academics that housing intensification, particularly in the GTA, must meet the following:

- *social* objectives by encouraging affordable housing and improved access to community amenities;
- *economic* objectives of lower infrastructure costs per new housing unit and more efficient use of services; and
- *environmental* objectives by increasing the feasibility of public transit and reducing automobile dependence.

Meeting these objectives is considered necessary to correct the low-density sprawl that has dominated the GTA since the 1970s. Sprawl is considered to have negative environmental, social, and economic consequences, including loss of greenlands and prime agricultural lands, increasing automobile dependence, and lack of diverse and affordable housing choices.

Redevelopment is thought to be the form of housing intensification most able to meet these objectives, particularly the objectives concerning the physical environment.

Why Redevelopment of Larger Sites?

Redevelopment of smaller sites has already received considerable attention, especially redevelopment of sites along the 1,000 kilometres of Metropolitan Toronto's main streets.

Redevelopment or partial redevelopment of larger sites may have a greater potential for accommodating a portion of the expected population increase. More to the point, such redevelopment is compatible with the widest range of urban forms. Appropriate large sites exist within Metropolitan Toronto, in the built-up parts of the surrounding regions, and near the built-up areas. Thus, unlike redevelopment of main streets, redevelopment of larger sites can make an evident contribution to intensification within a nodal or a centralized urban form, or within varieties of these types of form.

The IBI study identified larger sites amenable to redevelopment that totalled some 800 hectares in the City of Toronto and some 2,200 hectares in the Cites of Scarborough, North York, and Etobicoke. Other such sites lie in the surrounding regions.

The Steering Committee responsible for planning the charrette identified three types of larger site of special interest: large shopping malls, smaller shopping plazas, and "greenfield" sites within the built-up area not designated as parkland. A site of each type was identified, with the additional features that one was adjacent to the dense residential areas that surround downtown Toronto (the Greenwood race track), one was in what are now the inner suburbs of the region (the Downsview Plaza at Keele and Wilson), and one was outside Metropolitan Toronto (the large shopping mall known as the Pickering Town Centre).

One of the three teams of the charrette worked on ideas and proposals for the shopping centres. Another concerned itself with the Greenwood race track. A third team dealt with generic policy issues. The reports of the three teams comprise the next three chapters.

Part 2: Reports of the Charrette Teams

The reports of the three charrette teams in the three following chapters are reproduced here almost exactly as they were submitted by the team leaders.

Chapter 3: Policy Team

The policy group chose to focus its attention on

1. identifying the benefits associated with urbanization and reurbanization (residential intensification) and

2. the related policies which must be implemented to ensure these beneficial outcomes.

It must be understood that, in our opinion, there is no alternative to growth. Our choices as a community are between sprawl and more compact forms of development. We have concluded that the process of (re)urbanization, if properly undertaken, offers us the potential to manage anticipated growth responsibly and in a manner which will enhance our community and its physical (built and natural) environment.

We have chosen to use the terms 'urbanization' and 'reurbanization' instead of 'residential intensification.' We found the latter term both too broad and too narrow. It is too broad in that it denotes both small-scale intensification within existing neighbourhoods (e.g., basement apartments) and the redevelopment of very large sites (e.g., Downsview Airport). Small scale intensification of the existing housing stock (conversion and infill) has been well-researched and appropriate policies have been or are being developed at various levels of government. The issues surrounding large scale redevelopment, in contrast, have yet to be defined and addressed consistently and in a comprehensive manner.

The term residential intensification is, on the other hand, too narrow in that it is limited to a single land use, whereas the term reurbanization allows a more comprehensive approach to land use matters. Reurbanization also incorporates the notion of the *rehabilitation* of urban land. The special costs and issues surrounding rehabilitation may well need to be separated from considerations associated with the *end use* of that land. Finally, the term reurbanization suggests that we go beyond the specific concerns of individual redevelopment sites to a more comprehensive view of that site's place in the context of the entire urban region.

Our approach was to focus on six key policy areas which were viewed as important facets of the (re)urbanization process. In each of these areas we identified the anticipated benefits of reurbanization and the policy measures necessary either to ensure their realization or, at the very least, not to impede them.

Environment

What We Can Achieve

1. Reduced contamination of the air and water within the Toronto bioregion.

2. Preservation of farmland for growing food.

3. Protection for "natural" areas (woodlots, wetlands, valleyland) in the bioregion.

4. Reduced consumption of energy and resources, increased energy efficiency and, as a result, reduced environmental impacts (e.g. district heating)

5. *Increased* opportunities for the rehabilitation of contaminated land sites (that would not happen if development pressure were absent).

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Incorporate environment enhancement into the planning process through changes to the Planning Act and Building Code, delivered through site-specific performance standards for developments. These standards should apply to:

   - energy consumption

   - air and water quality

   - waste management and resource conservation

   - green space creation and enhancement

   - waste stream segregation and recycling

   - sanitary and storm run off

2. The Ministry of the Environment should develop policies and technologies to facilitate the efficient cleanup of existing contaminated sites.

Transportation

What We Can Achieve

1. More widespread development of more frequent, higher quality, and a more diverse choice of transit services.

2. Reduced dependency on the automobile, resulting in:

   - more efficient use of transit funds

   - reduced energy consumption and air pollution

   - fewer accidents, injuries, and fatalities

3. Reduced average trip lengths for all modes, leading to lower energy consumption and greater efficiency in the use of road space, even for those trips taken by automobile.

4. Overall, transportation costs will be lower. The journey to work will be shorter and less time consuming and there will be much greater flexibility in the choice of travel mode for a variety of other trip purposes.

UNLESS WE DO SOME-THING ABOUT IT, MOST OF THESE 2,000,000 PEOPLE WILL MAKE US REDEVELOP OUR SUBURBAN FARMLANDS AND FORESTS.

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Provincial subsidies for infrastructure should be tied to reurbanization in ways that encourage municipalities to increase allowable densities along transportation corridors and around transit nodes.

2. Differential subsidies, such as those that favour low density communities over high density communities, should be equalized or altered to favour intensification.

3. Differential subsidies that favour capital investment over operating costs should be equalized so that transit agencies are encouraged to use available funds in as cost-effective a manner as possible.

4. Pricing inequities, notably tax deductions and allowances for the ownership, operation, and parking of automobiles, that encourage the choice of automobile over transit should be eliminated.

5. Provincial initiatives related to improvements in integration and coordination of all services within the GTA should be accelerated so that, ultimately, from the perspective of the user, there should be one integrated system operating within the entire GTA.

Economy

What We Can Achieve

1. Renewal and diversification of the GTA economy.
2. New housing closer to jobs, a wider range of job opportunities and shorter commuting distances.
3. Affordable housing, which is needed to maintain and attract new industry and workers, improving labour market integration.
4. Increased productivity through improved energy efficiency and reduced transportation costs.
5. A chance to look systematically at the future of under- utilized industrial lands and to strengthen the role of industry.

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Develop a policy on the future of industrial lands specifying a possible role for industry in reurbanization (e.g. San Francisco's long term industrial land use plan which incorporates the principle of reduced auto dependence).
2. Closer integration of economic development strategies with land use policies.
3. Provide training and employment adjustment programs for populations associated with reurbanization.
4. Provide a range of types of housing in all communities to counter job mismatch.
5. Develop more flexible land use policies to include industry in mixed use areas, subject to performance standards.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREVENT THIS HOUSING SPRAWL AND DESTRUCTION OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ?

Social

What We Can Achieve

1. Increased stock of affordable housing.
2. Increased mix of housing types to meet the residential needs of all groups in society, particularly those of seniors, single parents, disabled persons and low-income families.
3. Improved proximity to existing services -- schools, hospitals, community agencies, etc.
4. Improved viability of *community-based* services, which are more flexible and cost-effective.
5. Reduced transit costs as a result of a more efficient transit system.
6. Improved labour market integration, especially of disadvantaged groups, as a result of improved access to public and specialized transportation, work and services.
7. Reduced heating, electricity, and transportation costs for low income groups as a result of improved energy efficiency.
8. Increased community vitality, giving rise to more dynamic cultural activities through increased demand and use.

WE CAN SET LIMITS TO OUR GROWTH - BUT WILL IT REALLY WORK ?

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Reurbanization should favour sites near existing public transportation routes.
2. Require that reurbanization projects promote mixed-income communities that promote social integration. A minimum 25 percent of residential units should be affordable housing (with 1/2 of this amount being offered to non-profit and other social housing suppliers).
3. Reurbanization projects should provide for a variety of housing types and sizes, including units designed for disabled persons.
4. Reurbanization projects should incorporate the latest in energy-efficient construction and operating technologies.

Urban Structure

What We Can Achieve

1. The preservation of a variety of recreation (green) areas.
2. The co-ordination of diverse employment and housing opportunities.
3. A variety of urban character.
4. The maintenance of existing neighbourhoods and the enhancement of those neighbourhoods when unsightly and noxious uses are removed and green spaces and recreation areas added.
5. The integration of work, shopping and leisure opportunities.
6. Accommodating the changing socio-demographic profile of the community.

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Evaluate the need for, and identify criteria for, the preservation and long term protection of green, agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas. Remedy current deficiencies in parks and open space.
2. Provincial funding for transportation and housing and municipal infrastructure to be integrated along the lines of intensification.
3. Integration of transportation policies/regulations with land use planning/regulation to encourage intensification.
4. The development of co-ordinated infrastructure corridors -- transit, hydro, pipelines, etc.
5. Mandate the creation of public infrastructure within large site intensification (streets, parks).
6. Set appropriate built form and land use relationships between existing and newly redeveloped areas.
7. Policies to encourage mixed use development.

Mixed Use

What We Can Achieve

1. More housing close to services, shopping and entertainment and, in consequence, more customers for merchants.
2. Preservation of lively, familiar main streets.
3. More eyes on street, which makes people feel safer.
4. Better accessibility to services for all populations.
5. More creative, user-friendly design.
6. More options. People will find more things they need at one location and will be less dependent on the automobile.
7. Many different activities can be combined in a relatively small-scale context.

How We Can Make It Happen

1. Strongly encourage (or require) a mix of land uses and a mix of housing types, incomes and tenure forms (with specific targets). This would also apply to new suburban development.
2. For mixed-use development establish reduced parking standards.
3 Encourage private sector provision of community services within mixed use areas.
4. Structure levies to encourage higher densities and mixed use.
5. (Re)integrate retail uses into the life and fabric of the community and bring retail malls back into the public domain.

OR WE CAN BUILD A MORE COMPACT AND EFFICIENT CITY. THERE'S ROOM TO MAKE IT WORK. A GREATER TORONTO.

The Critical Step

Residential intensification (both in the context of urbanization and reurbanization) will depend critically upon strong political leadership and commitment, specifically from the Government of Ontario. This call to action is embedded in all of the recommendations proposed in this section.

The Province must assume responsibility for ensuring that the planning process is expeditious, open and equitable. Moreover, it is essential that clear priorities are set for spending on infrastructural improvements which facilitate reurbanization.

Chapter 4: Large Site Team: Greenwood Raceway

Description

The Greenwood Racetrack is located in the east end of the City of Toronto. The site is bounded on the north by Queen Street East, on the south by Lakeshore Boulevard, on the east by Woodbine Avenue, and on the west by Coxwell Avenue. Eastern Avenue bisects the north west corner of the site.

The Greenwood Racetrack site is approximately 94 acres. The site is currently classified as amusement grounds (being used as a racetrack facility) with the parking and warehouse facilities also on site.

The immediate neighbourhood was developed in the 1920s. Queen Street separates two distinct parts of the area. North of Queen is primarily residential. The predominant land use south of Queen is the Greenwood race track.

The residential area to the north is comprised of single family houses, with the exception of the occasional apartment building. Retail stores and commercial businesses are located along portions of Queen Street.

Residential uses extend further north while to the south of the race track are located recreational uses such as the Ashbridge's Bay Yacht Club, the Summerville Swimming Pool, the Beaches boardwalk and general recreational site-seeing.

Residential streets in the area are generally patterned on a grid system with all local streets allowing two-way traffic, with the exception of Dixon Road and Orchard Park Boulevard.

There is regular public transit service on the main roads of the area. Streetcar services run along

Queen Street and Kingston Road, connecting the area to the easterly and westerly districts of the City. Bus services on Coxwell and Woodbine Avenues extend to the north, connecting the area to the Bloor-Danforth subway system.

Analysis

The development should fit as a part of the city rather than being considered as an isolated project. This starts with an appreciation of the city's anatomy (social, ecological, economic). While the site should be looked upon as a piece of the urban fabric of the city it must have its own inherent sense of place, as an identifiable neighbourhood.

Physical

The opportunities for physically integrating the Greenwood site into the surrounding neighbourhoods include: confirming the commercial role of Queen street and perhaps re-aligning Lakeshore Boulevard through the site; consideration of the existing configuration of local roadways and parks in adjacent neighbourhoods. In addition, there is a need to provide a density sufficient to support public transit and capitalize on proximity to the waterfront.

Transportation

The regional importance of the Lakeshore Boulevard-Kingston Road corridor to the movement of traffic between downtown Toronto and the eastern part of Metropolitan Toronto indicates the need to directly link the two roads.

A variety of options exist for redefining the role of Lakeshore Blvd. between Coxwell Ave. and Woodbine Ave. to relate the site more directly to the Waterfront.

Improved public transit linkages to the area (e.g., extension of the Queen's Quay L.R.T.) are vital to accommodating redevelopment of this site, and can serve to lead further intensification efforts on other similar sites (e.g., port lands).

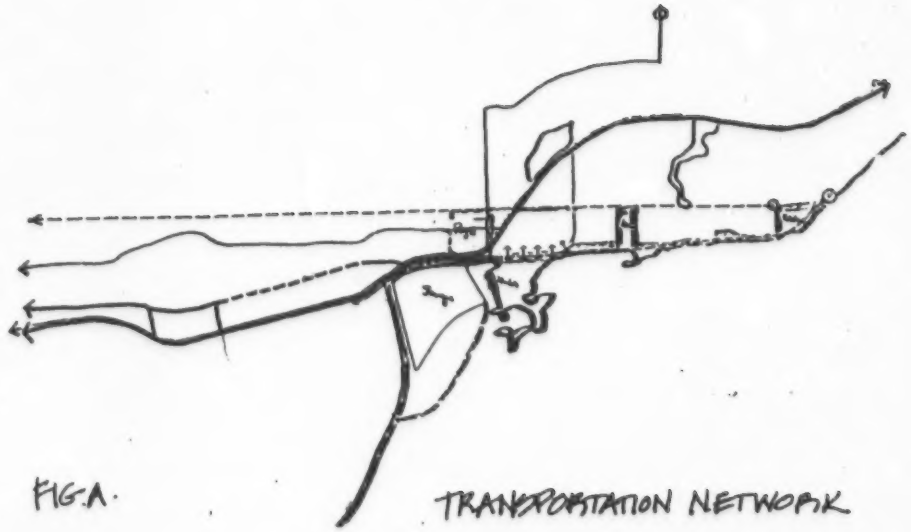


FIG.A. TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Community

The location of the site within the city provides an opportunity to integrate the site with its surroundings

The quality of green and open space becomes particularly important when intensifying development on a large site.

There is a unique opportunity to upgrade the community facilities and services available not only to the future residents of this neighbourhood, but to the surrounding community as well (e.g., schools, daycare, institutional uses).

With access to broader urban infrastructure, the Greenwood site has clear potential for multiple uses that can contribute to improving live/work relationships.

Environmental

Within the goals of sustainable development (designing for a stable ecosystem) pollution generated by intensification of a site should be dealt with internally rather than externalizing the costs.

Cities and elements of the urban fabric both pollute and sterilize the local and neighbouring ecosystem. The goals for future development must be to provide a net gain to the environment. The appropriate environmental analysis can be divided into safety and health issues, ecosystem maintenance, and human interaction with the environment.

Surface water and ground water regimes resulting from the redevelopment should meet a predevelopment condition, as though the site were a naturally vegetated area such as a meadow.

Air quality goals will be needed to ensure complete ventilation of all areas within the development but without excessive increases in wind velocities. Areas with air quality hazards must be avoided until the sources are eliminated.

Ecological linkages to surrounding areas and within the site must be maintained or established. These may be established through the open spaces, the streetscape, the gardens, sideyards and rooftop gardens. Structural diversity must be provided within the open spaces, as well an adequate habitat to support the life of desirable species. This would include nesting areas for birds, feeding and roosting areas as well as protection during winter and severe storms.

Linkages between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems must be re- established or maintained. Aquatic and wetland ecosystems can serve not only an aesthetic function but also can be used in a utilitarian fashion to assimilate certain pollutants or contain them.

Open space can be considered as having a carrying capacity for human use which should not be exceeded. The human environment, both indoors and outdoors, should provide for private spaces, gathering and meeting areas, reduction of "crowding", visibility of all mandatory walkways and paths, and structural and

visual diversity.

Economic

This is a relatively clean, unproblematic site that is ideal for providing residential intensification. From an economic standpoint infrastructure costs of sewerage, water, roads, soft infrastructure, community facilities, and schools must be taken into consideration as well as market demand for certain unit types.

Findings And Recommendations

Planning Principles

Two planning principles were defined by the team:

1. a large intensified site needs a significant consolidated green space to enhance both the environmental and social liveability of the community, and;

2. there must be a hierarchy of city streets that responds to the character of use happening along them.

Building Design Principles

Six building design principles were considered by the team:

1. there should be a flexibility of building types in terms of mixtures of uses (commercial, retail, and residential) and unit type (e.g, developing more flexible ceiling systems to accommodate different functions);

2. there should be continuous building frontages to form urban streetscapes, and a consideration of mainstreet goals in terms of retail opportunities at grade and residential above;

3. intensification can be achieved through modest building height through the development of a variety of residential building types. Architecture that considers the relationship between buildings and the street can strongly enhance the livability of a community. There should be a maximum of grade related units;

4. there should be a hierarchy of open spaces from public to semi- public to private and also a connectedness of open space.(e.g. linkage system of open courtyards.)

5. environmental consideration should take a high priority in residential building design. At grade units are particularly conducive to allowing people the use of gardens for environmental uses (e.g., recycling, composting, gardening). Orientation of building face should take into account passive heat gain;

6. community services should be integrated into the mixed-use nature of site design for example schools can be incorporated into commercial and or residential buildings rather than being isolated on separate sites.

Environmental Considerations

The predevelopment condition of the site is an environmental ruin. The water runoff from the parking area includes toxic waste, manure and chemicals from lawn treatment, which enter the lake through the storm drainage system. The linkage for nearly all ecological components has been severed. The following are recommendations on how to improve the environmental condition of the site (see preliminary design concepts on pages following for illustration of these points).

1. the first 1/2 inch of rain can be captured from the polluting sources (i.e., paved and hard surfaces), and can be directed to a wet pond/marsh system created in park landscaping;

2. roof runoff and runoff from "clean" sources can be led in a separate storm drain to flush into Ashbridge's Bay;

3. all green space areas can be interlinked through 'french' drain systems to collect and absorb the first flush;

4. overflows for major storm events can be discharged to the head of Ashbridge's Bay for "clean" flushing of the bay.

5. a channel connection could connect the lake waters on the east with the still waters of Ashbridge's Bay to provide a flushing action and increase the land/water interface for human use.

6. the park space extending from the southern extreme of the site to Queen Street can open a major linkage from the lake into the existing rather isolated pockets of habitats to the north of the site.

7. the internal courtyards of the plans can provide for east/west linkages of the open space.

8. a linkage from the site to the west to interconnect the Leslie Spit can be provided.

9. prevailing wind is from the northwest and should not be tunnelled through the location of any streets.

10. the site ventilation can be encouraged through the interconnected courtyard open space system.

11. pedestrians can choose either to walk along the streets or courtyard walkways to and from their homes.

12. landscaping and relief within these spaces can provide for both private and public space.

13. the large park area as well as the semi-private interior courtyards can provide recreational opportunities.

14. the removal of the lakeshore drive can

encourage use of the public land to the south while the channel discourages intensive use of the more southerly portion of the peninsula.

Economic Feasibility

The following points were reached by the team with respect to economic feasibility of redevelopment at the site:

- the site can provide a 25 percent affordable housing component to meet provincial guidelines in mid-rise housing forms, much of which can be suitable for families;

- the site is suitable for market housing serving all segments of the community (families, empty nesters, singles). Market housing will be targeted to all segments of the housing market ranging from moderate price levels to luxury accommodation

- retail, commercial and industrial uses can be provided in the community at competitive rates

- the development of economics account for a wide range of high quality community services to be provided, including schools,daycare, places of worship, community health facilities, and other uses.

With respect to environmental design, the team concluded that we should not ask the cost of undertaking it; we should ask the cost of not undertaking it. The cost of not doing it includes: water pollution, losses to quality of recreation spaces, air pollution, increase in transportation cost and a general destruction of the quality of life in the community.

Preliminary Design Concepts

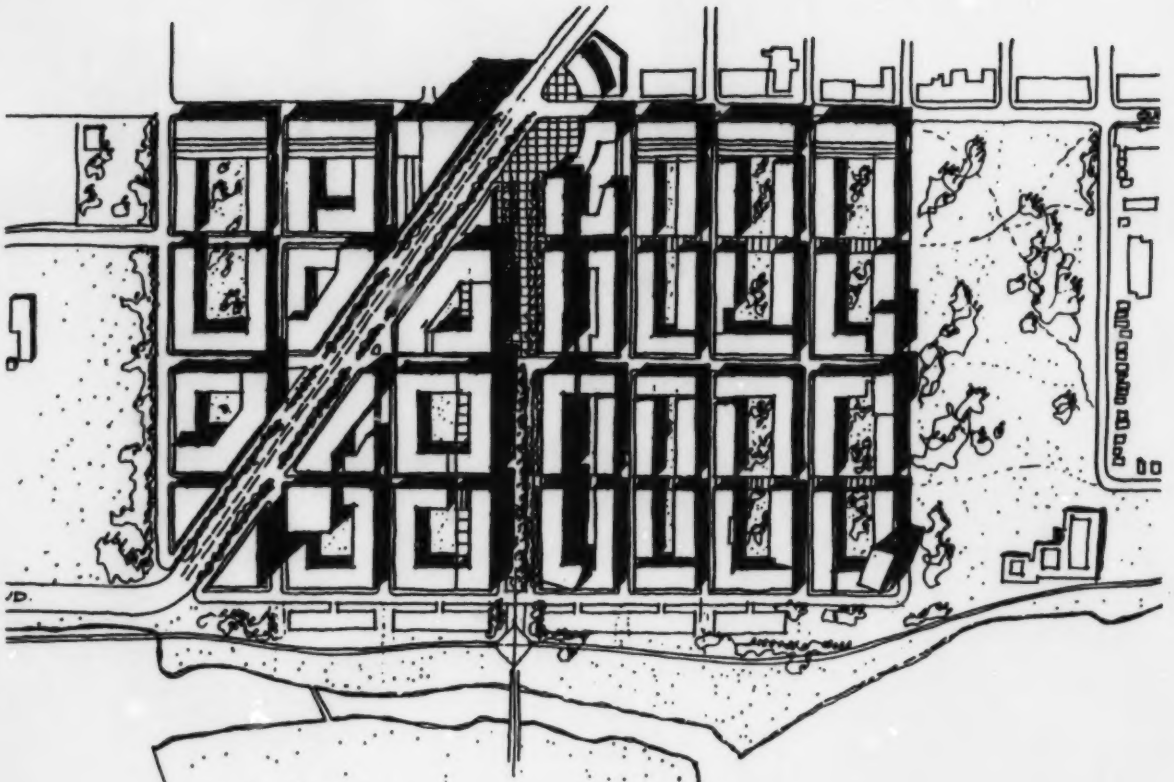
Five preliminary design concepts were arrived at for the site, which are illustrated in the subsequent figures.

Concept 1: Re-interpretation of Toronto's Street Grid (Figure 1).

- extension of Toronto grid street pattern accommodates a variety of development heights, densities, parcel sizes and uses (Figure 2);

- re-aligned Lakeshore Blvd. cuts through the grid on an angle, creating uniquely shaped lots that provide an opportunity for a variety of building forms;

- Lakeshore Blvd. is envisioned as a broad urban boulevard, with LRT lines in the centre flanked by two lanes in each direction for through traffic. These are flanked by landscaped strips and local service roads (Figure 3).



CONCEPT #1. RE-INTERPRETATION OF TORONTO STREET GRID FIG. 1.

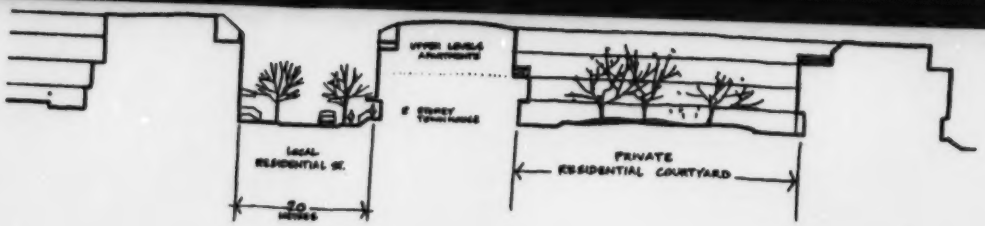


FIG. 2 TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL STREET AND COURTYARD

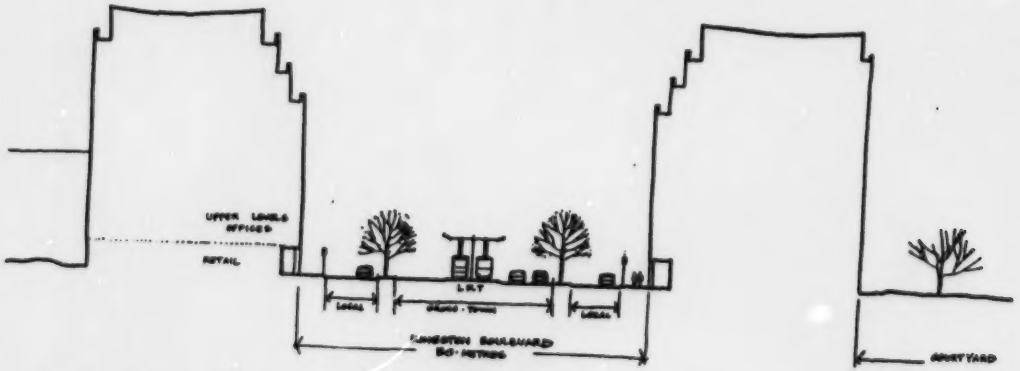


FIG. 3 RE-ALIGNED LAKESHORE BLVD. WITHIN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

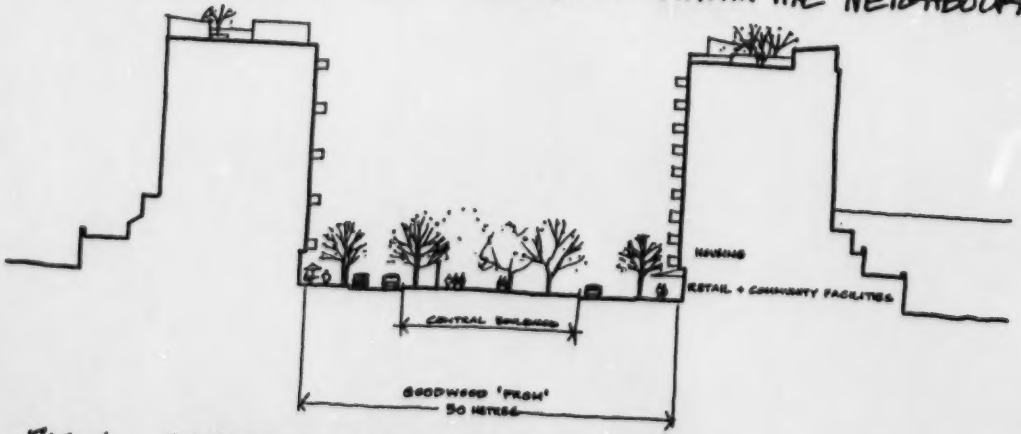


FIG. 4. CENTRAL PROMENADE TO LAKEFRONT CONCEPT #1.

- a park connects the waterfront and Queen Street on the west side of Woodbine Avenue - a clean interface with existing community which incorporates a variety of community activities and services along its periphery (Figure 4).

Concept 2: Central Park on the Lake (Figure 5).

- the community is formed around a variety of open spaces:
- there is a central park ringed with higher density residential buildings;
- a "corniche" treatment is given to the waterfront edge;
- the metropolitan open space along waterfront is consolidated, cutting a channel into Ashbridge's Bay to improve water flow and to accommodate a variety of recreational activities (e.g., paddle boats);
- small urban open spaces are proposed throughout the community;
- semi-private open spaces are associated with residential buildings throughout the community (Figure 6).
- The transportation system includes:
  - a realigned Lakeshore Blvd. as a commercial boulevard (Figure 6A);
  - building on Queen Street as a "main street" in keeping with its function in the community to the east;
  - local streets throughout the rest of the community, except for the "corniche" frontage along the waterfront and wider avenues around the edges of the Central Park.
- The residential building fabric of the community includes:
  - six storeys over retail stores along Queen Street;
  - six storey garden apartment buildings with 12 storey mini-towers along the edges of the central park. The bottom two storeys are grade related row-house style units with the option for some local retail uses;
  - generally six storeys along the residential streets;
- placement of a high residential tower at the southerly end of the Lakeshore to mark the western entrance to the site.

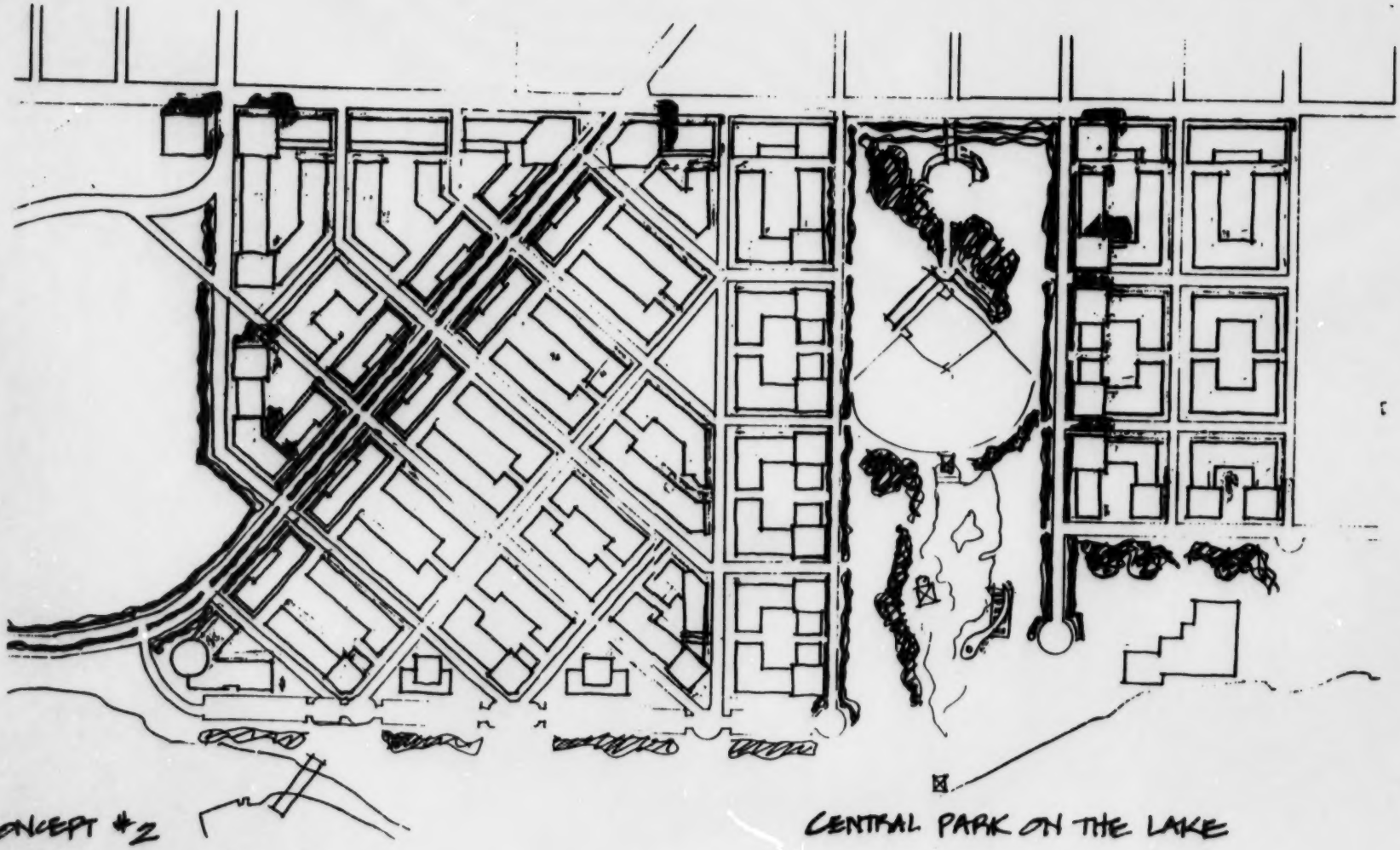
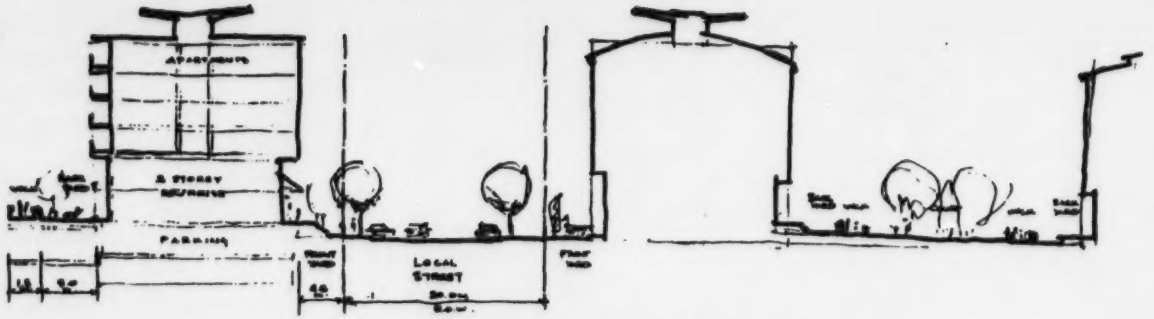


FIG. 5



BLOCK SECTION

FIG. 6

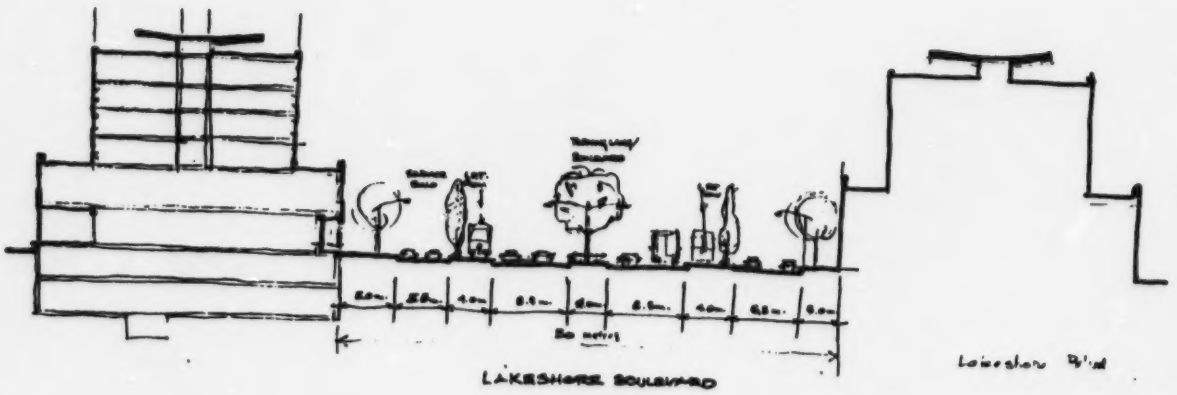


FIG. 6A

CONCEPT 2 CENTRAL PARK ON THE LAKE

Concept 3: Waterfront Centre Concept (Figures 7 and 8)

- commercial node focussed on transit stop at realigned Lakeshore Blvd. with higher densities and building heights.
- new "mainstreet" of mixed-use buildings with retail and office commercial on the lower floors, and residential units above;
- significant public open space linking the waterfront to the commercial node;
- a residential "boulevard" parallel to the Queen - Lakeshore commercial street acting as the spine of the residential neighbourhood, and tying into the waterfront road access;
- two housing precincts of mid and low-rise buildings designed around small courtyards, with higher buildings forming the edges of internal open space "commons";
- node of new community facilities adjacent to the existing swimming pool complex on the waterfront;
- integration of soft community services into the mixed-use commercial core;
- extension of the public waterfront boardwalk along the north side of the major park, developed as a high density commercial and recreational (corniche-like) street with waterfront views enhanced through a scaling back of building heights on the south side of the park.

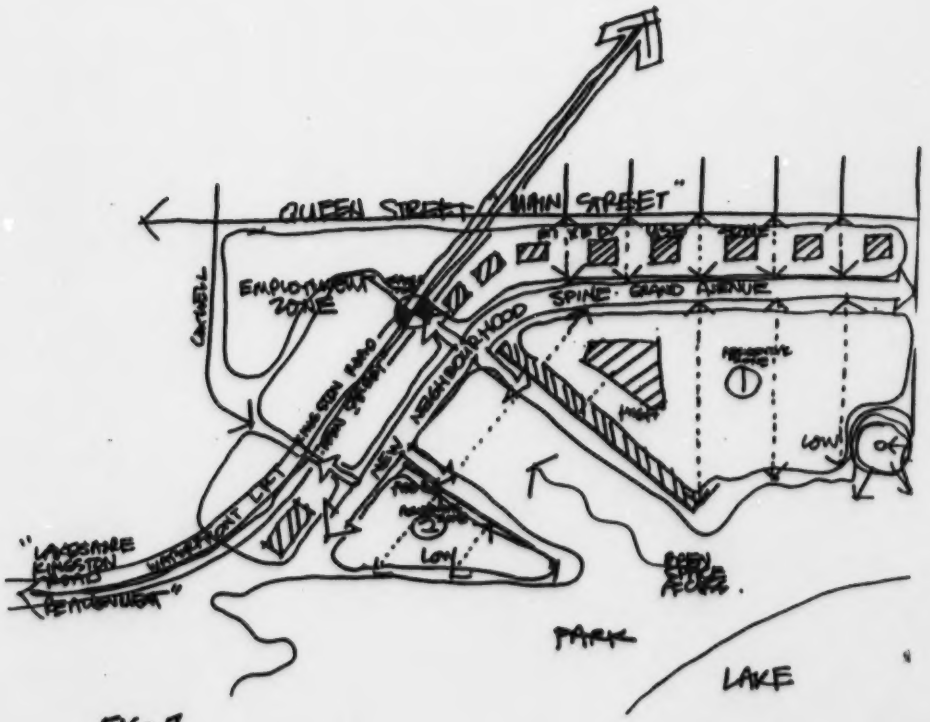


FIG. 7

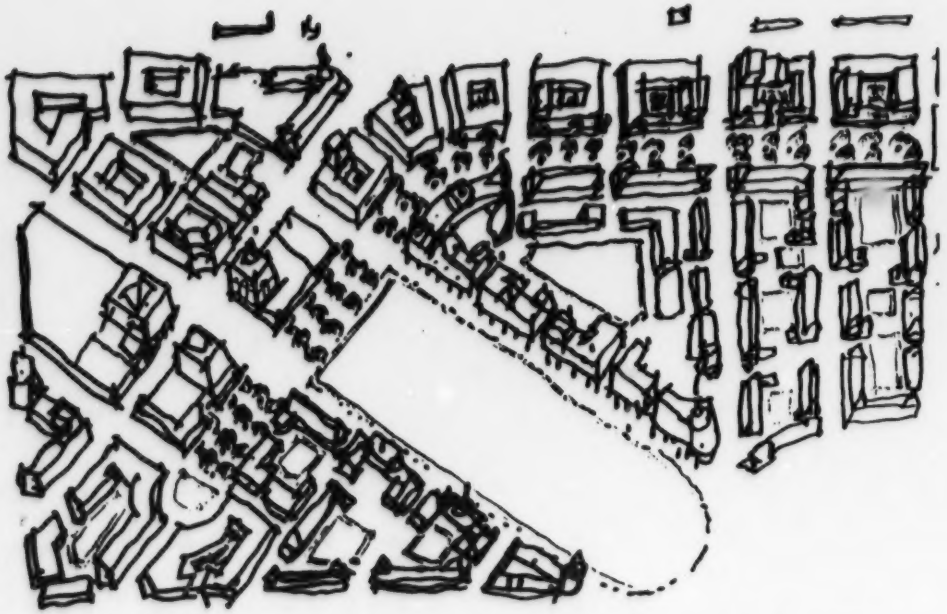


FIG. 8 CONCEPT 3 WATERFRONT CENTRE

Concept 4: Three Boulevards Concept (Figure 9)

- based on a belief that cities are made up of unique places and areas, not only streets and blocks, this concept seeks to create a special urban area;
- the intention is to provide spaces for the people to create and belong to this community;
- the angled re-alignment of Lakeshore Blvd. is used as the basis for a series of radial boulevards around a central commercial plaza facing Queen Street;
- a tree-lined boulevard connects the central plaza to the waterfront, while a southeasterly boulevard leads to a commercial/recreational node at the southerly base of Woodbine Avenue.

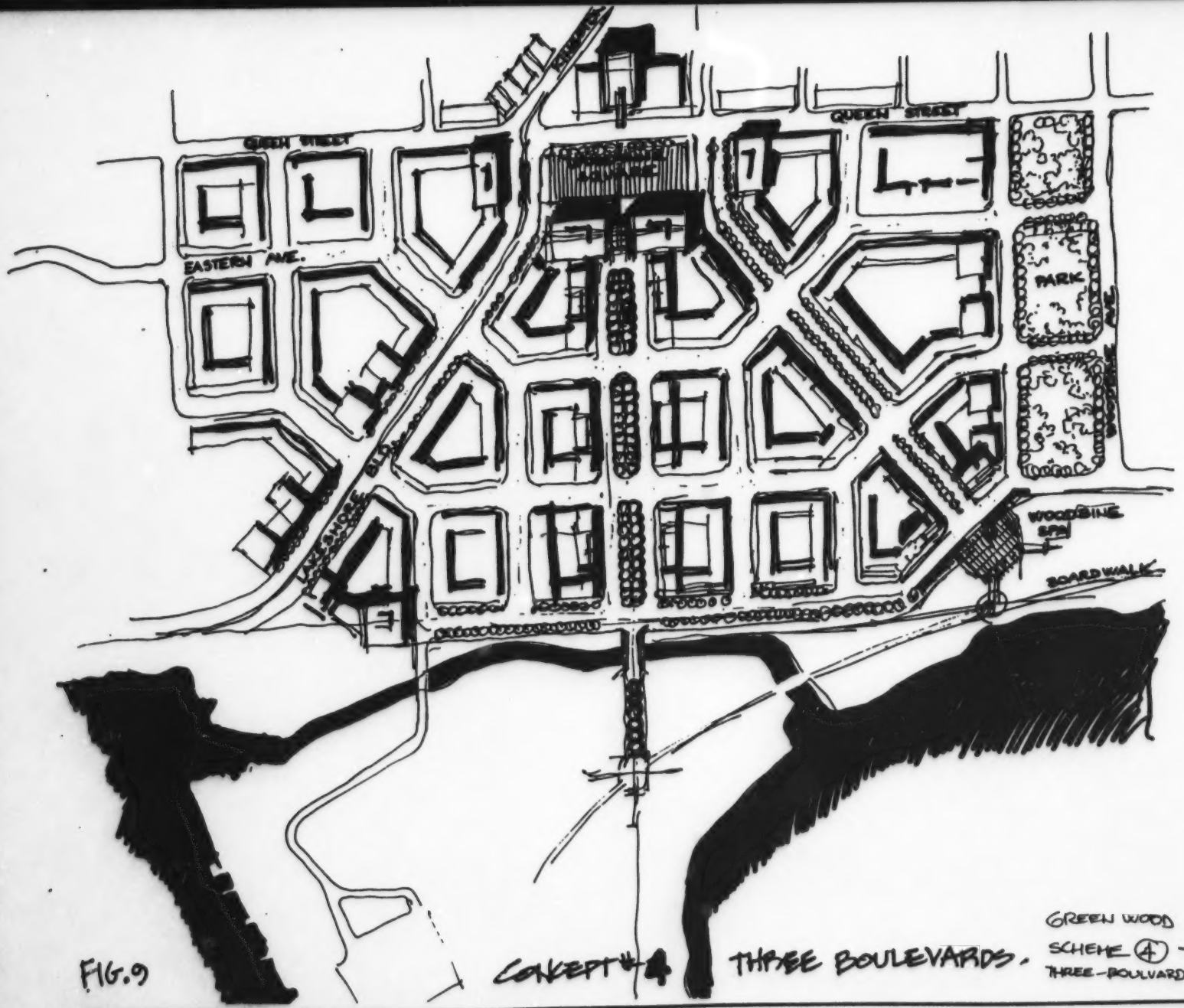


FIG. 9

CONCEPT #4 THREE BOULEVARDS.

GREEN WOOD RACETRACK
SCHEME (4) - IVANA BELFRA
THREE-BOULVARDS SCHEME

Concept 5: Living at Greenwood: Life in the Fast Track (Figure 10).

- Greenwood Raceway can stay on the site in a new form - as an urban feature/park (e.g., CBC Broadcast Centre, Skydome) incorporating a mix of urban uses (Figures 11 and 12);

- lake-facing, double-width block system around the perimeter, separated from the raceway by a tree-lined boulevard;

- the Queen Street frontage is completely revamped to include commercial nodes at each end, and a mixture of street-oriented retail and residential uses built into a new grandstand structure;

- LRT access along the Lakeshore/Woodbine corridor allows for reduced parking on the site, accommodated underground;

- this approach allows for logical extension of the mixed use grid system should the raceway eventually leave the site.

Summary

The large site team's objective was to create and analyze development solutions for housing intensification on large urban sites using Greenwood raceway as an example.

The starting point was a look at the city's social, economic and ecological anatomy. The site's connection with the city was examined to ensure that from the outset it would not become just a development but a neighbourhood that would generate pride.

Two physical opportunities presented were the confirmation of the commercial role of Queen Street and the ability to capitalize on the sites proximity to the lake.

The relationship of Lakeshore Blvd., Coxwell Avenue and Kingston Road was examined and changes to their configuration were suggested. It was also concluded that transportation would improve with the extension of the Queen's Quay LRT to the site.

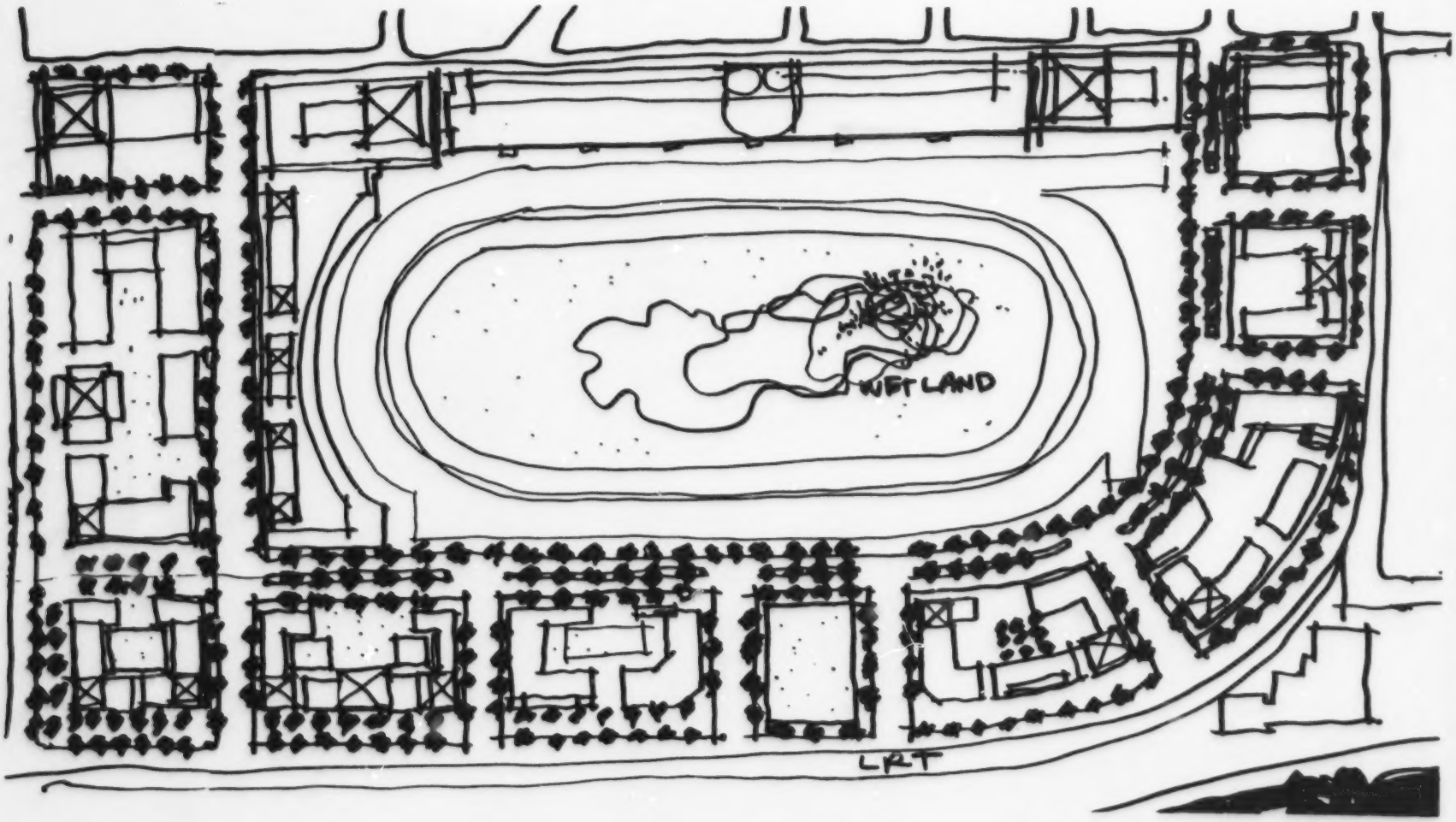


FIG. 10

CONCEPT #5 :

LIVING AT GREENWOOD
LIFE IN THE FAST LANE.

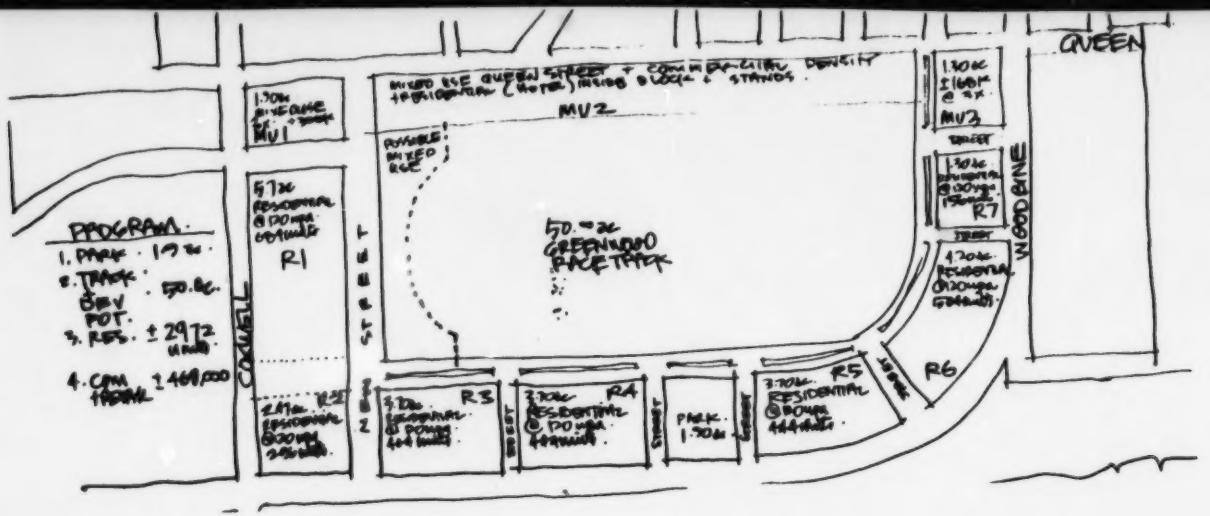
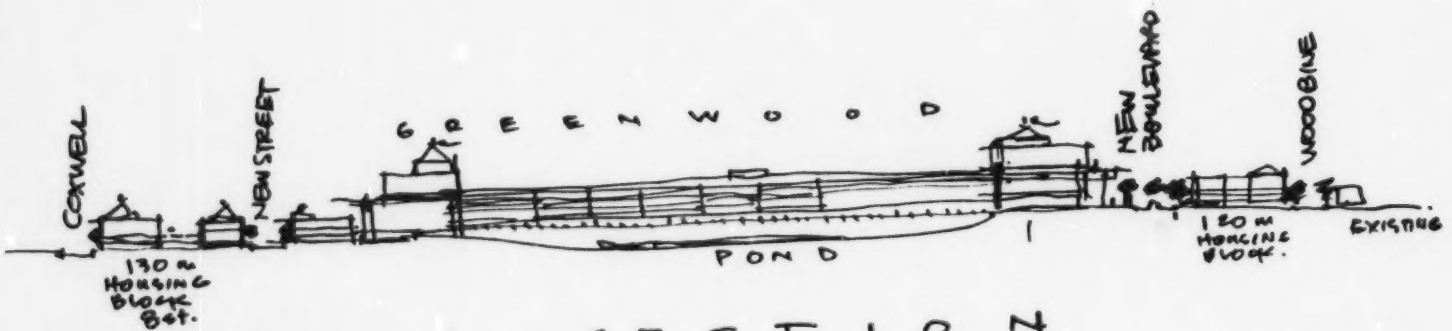


FIG. 11



EAST WEST SECTION

NORTH SOUTH SECTION.

FIG. 12.

THE "TRACK IN" CONCEPT
SITE SECTIONS.
1:2000.

The team considered the environmental implications of intensification for the site. Being aware of the population pressure on the existing green space, a new large consolidated green space is necessary in any redevelopment proposal. The opportunity was also capitalized on to rebuild ecological linkages that were broken by the existing track.

Environmental aspects relating to water and ventilation were considered in all the development proposals. Quality of life considerations were taken into consideration along with economic imperatives.

The team's planning principles included a mix of commercial, industrial, retail and residential use on the site. An important goal for redevelopment of this site is to strengthen live/work relationships. Flexible buildings that are easily converted from residential to commercial use would be incorporated. Community services such as schools, daycare, and health care would be incorporated in mixed-use designs.

Architecture would stress grade related units.

The team's economic feasibility study confirmed that a mix of housing types on the site would address a broad range of markets: 25 percent affordable housing component, family, singles, seniors, a mix of moderate prices and luxury accommodation.

Chapter 5: Shopping Malls Team

Introduction and Goals

Two goals guided the team's work during the charrette. They were:

1. To investigate the potential of existing mall sites to contribute to meeting the objective of housing intensification and

2. To give the CCRB the opportunity to see housing intensification in a positive light.

To achieve these goals, the team undertook to:

1. Develop a set of principles and evaluation criteria for redevelopment concepts (see Table 2);

2. Consider concepts for redevelopment of a regional mall (Pickering Town Centre) and a neighbourhood plaza (Downsview Plaza), with a view to creating opportunities for housing intensification;

3. Test development concepts against the evaluation criteria; and

4. Identify generic principles for intensification of regional mall and neighbourhood plaza sites.

To illustrate the context within which the redevelopment concepts for the regional mall and neighbourhood plaza emerged, it is useful to begin by looking at the following:

- what challenges redevelopment poses for the construction industry;

- perspective on housing intensification with local community needs; and

- generic concepts for housing intensification for regional malls and neighbourhood plazas.

This chapter concludes with the specific redevelopment concepts for the Pickering Town Centre and Downsview Plaza.

Challenges to Construction Industry

The archetypal concepts for housing intensification of neighbourhood plaza and regional mall sites illustrates a range of challenges for the Canadian construction industry to address in the context of the design and construction of these building types. The challenges include:

1. Providing the resources to build a broad range

of housing types within existing neighbourhoods to accommodate the needs of all segments of society.

2. Improving the technologies for building higher densities at lower heights including fire separations, sound separations, and vertical transportation systems.

3. Addressing practically the environmental issues involved in exterior walls for energy conservation, windows for energy conservation, waste management and recycling, water management, and use of hydro, gas and other utilities.

4. Reinforcing pride in the craft to enhance the quality of construction in the field, and ensure the value of the investment society makes in its built environment.

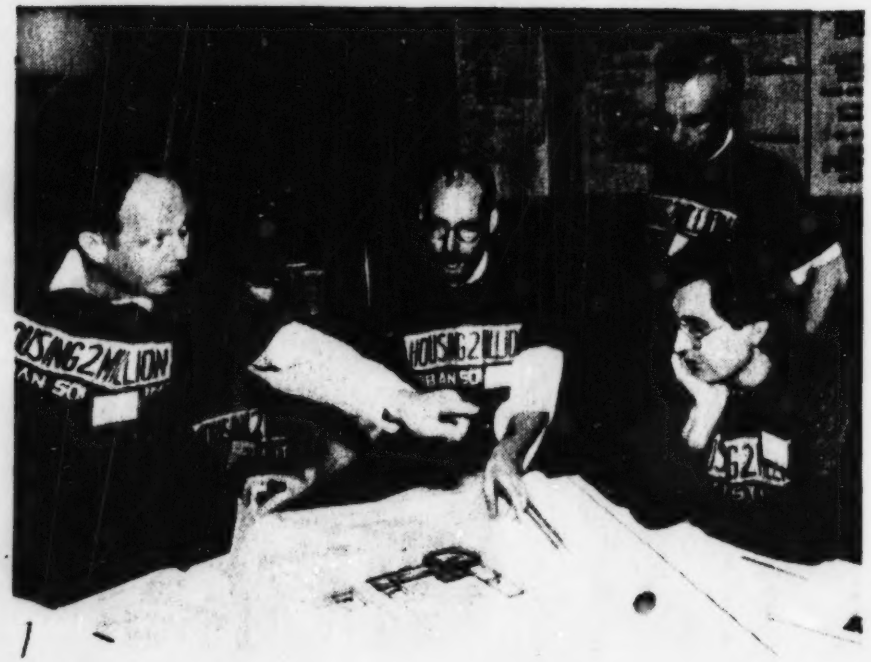
Principle	Criteria
Environmental: Redevelopment will achieve net environmental gain	energy conservation air quality improvement water conservation (quantitative and qualitative improvements) waste management reduction noise abatement micro-environment improvement (i.e. wind, sunlight, shade) enhancement of local natural environments
Transportation: Redevelopment shall contribute towards balanced transportation usage	traffic circulation (i.e. movement of goods and people, including vehicular, pedestrian, biking, and walking) access to public transit parking/loading
Community: Redevelopment projects shall enhance quality of life of residents	public amenities (parks, schools, libraries, etc.) public places support local services (recreation, hospitals, churches, retail, daycare etc.) compatibility with local goals and objectives employment opportunities social functions legal right to access tenure demographic flexibility culture
Economic: Redevelopment shall be financially feasible for the owner/developer, municipality and residents	municipal services community benefits fiscal/municipal impact property values and taxes need for additional infrastructure public/private sector roles marketability phasing legal issues regarding existing owners/tenants
Physical: Redevelopment shall reflect sound land use planning principles and the highest architectural design standards	density type of housing surrounding land use compatibility security/safety visual impact landscaping and open space height and massing street definition barrier free design construction technique (economical and environmental) physical adaptability identity (signature and landmarking) building codes and regulations

Integrating Housing Intensification with the Local Community Needs: A Process Issue

Within the malls team, opinions differed about 'process' issues related to residential intensification, particularly in relation to the role of the developer and the local community. Opinions ranged from cynicism ("concentrate on residential design that will satisfy local officials and pass OMB review") to pragmatism ("without addressing local community

concerns about the benefits and impacts of the project, the approvals process will be needlessly painful"). Both perspectives have elements of risk.

Intensification efforts using the first opinion focus on residential design, the effectiveness of the built form and meeting requirements for planning approvals. This perspective risks delays caused by citizen opposition, outright rejection of the development and increased costs. The positive aspect of this approach is the potential that little citizen opposition will occur and the approvals process will occur in an expedient manner.



Intensification efforts using the second opinion focus on integrating the design, layout, and site characteristics of the development with the needs and expectations of the local community. This perspective may be more timely, more costly and may still be subject to delays caused by citizen opposition. The positive aspect of this approach is that it decreases the potential of effective opposition.

Following a significant discussion of these perspectives the following conclusions were noted:

1. Successful intensification efforts require excellent land-use planning.

2. There are planning issues particular to mall site redevelopments that must be identified and addressed.

3. Successful intensification efforts require that the developer pay particular attention to local community goals, needs and concerns.

Intensification requires that the proponents:

- begin planning for residential intensification developments earlier than other types of development;

- undertake front-end studies to identify and understand issues and concerns of the community that will be the recipient of residential intensification;

- accept that the local community will articulate both tangible issues and perceived issues, and that both the tangible and perceived issues are "real" to the local community and must be addressed by the proponent;

- spend time and effort communicating with the local community. Listen to issues and accept that the local community may have legitimate viewpoints;

- accept that while intensification may be supported on a regional basis, the actual project may intensify local problems (increased traffic, removal of shopping facilities used by local residents, immigration of new residents having different needs than local residents). If these problems are not addressed, the community will have a strong political case for opposing the project;

- be prepared to integrate community concerns into design, layout and massing of the development;

- ensure the community is aware of design elements that incorporate both community and regional municipal needs;

- include design elements which:

    - use innovative approaches to enhancing the local environment;

    - improve the amount of open space for the community;

    - incorporate needed community facilities; and

    - alleviate existing transportation problems.

Generic concepts for intensification of regional mall sites:

- The mall is the main organizational element around which intensification schemes should be developed.

- The uses on the site should be integrated with each other and uses on adjacent sites.

- As broad a range of uses as possible in addition to the existing retail and commercial uses should be included.

- Existing retail uses must be respected and enhanced.

- The key to intensification is enhancing and enlivening the bleak exterior walls of the mall with buildings around its periphery.

Generic concepts for intensification of neighbourhood plazas:

- Intensification proposals should demonstrate a

commitment to reinforcing the streets and intersections which border the site.

- Medium-rise buildings with higher densities should be encouraged in the intensification of plaza sites.

- Intensification should be achieved through smaller buildings rather than megaprojects.

- Intensification should be achieved through environmentally responsible development.

In order to achieve an equitable distribution of environmental benefits of intensification:

- There must be environmental enhancement of the development site.

- Open space linkages should be created where possible within an accessible natural system.

- The site should not generate contaminated water runoff, air quality or sewage while production of oxygen and nutrient removal by plants should be maximized.

Pickering Town Centre

Description

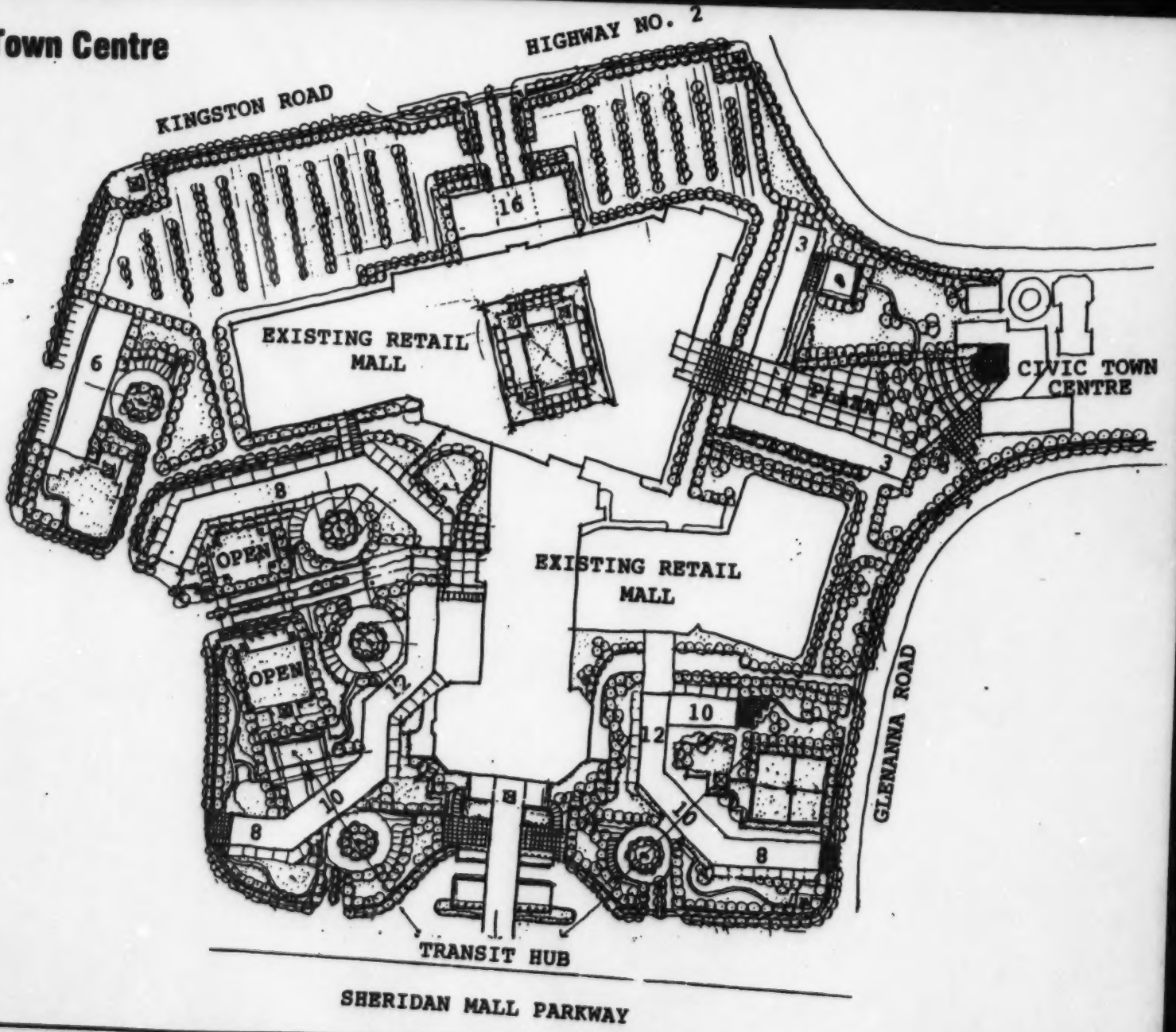
The Pickering Town Centre site is located south of Kingston Road, north of Highway 401 and extends east of Liverpool Road (Regional Road 29) to Glenanna Road. The Pickering GO transit station is located on the south side of Highway 401, directly opposite the mall. The 53-acre site consists of the sprawling mall building, 5 other small service-related buildings and over 4000 parking spaces. It is a focal point for downtown Pickering.

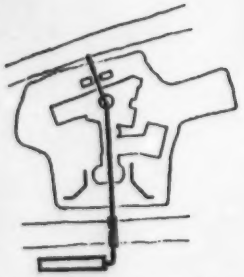
Adjacent to the site are the following land uses: office, retail and personal service commercial to the west; medium density residential and retail and personal service commercial to the north; and medium and high density residential as well as institutional, office and light industrial to the east.

The site is owned by JDS Investments Limited. The last major development on the site occurred in the mid-1980s when the Sears department store and a connecting mall were added.

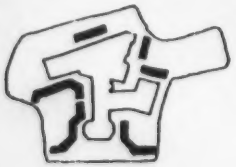
The site falls within the Town of Pickering's Town Centre Community. With respect to residential development, the plan for the Town Centre community calls for high density development, with a mix of high and medium density uses to provide for a variety of housing types.

Pickering Town Centre



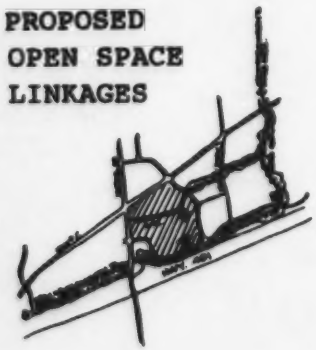


MAIN STREET



NEW WALLS

PROPOSED
OPEN SPACE
LINKAGES



Summary of Principles

Statement 1: Suburban malls are car-oriented- where's the main street?

Principle: Convert the one dimensional use mall into a village organized along a "Main Street".

How:

1. 24 hour use
2. full public access
3. more varied uses such as housing, barber shops, doctors, offices, hotel, daycare, sidewalk cafe, flower shop, main square, recreation facilities.
4. destinations such as transit, housing, city hall/civic square, library, theatres.

Statement 2: "Mall" is an inward looking structure with blank exterior walls.

Principle: Build housing in parking areas and give a new human face to bare mall buildings and put parking underground.

Opportunities

The site is large with a high percentage of unbuilt space. The centre is near Highway 401 and a GO station. The land is high, dry, clear, and serviced. There is likely public support for improving the aesthetics of the centre. The opportunity exists to develop a district heating system (link to Hydro corridor). Open space linkages can be developed through the Hydro corridor and City Hall link with Duffins' Creek Valley to the east, and westward towards the Rouge River Valley.

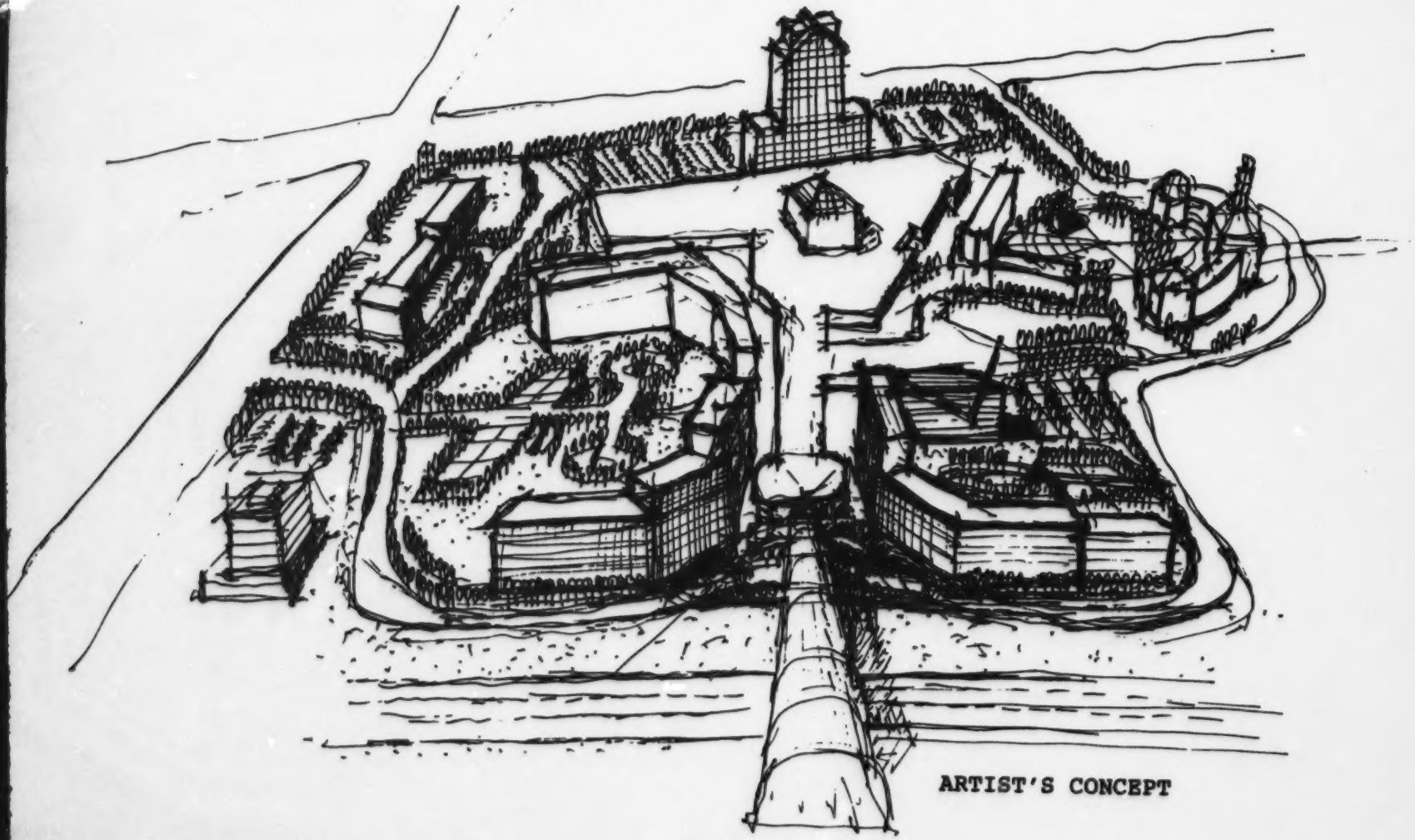
Problems

This is a viable economic entity whose owners and tenants are content with the status quo. It was considered economically unfeasible from the landlord's and tenants' points of view to consider significant changes to the mall buildings due to the expansions that have taken place in the last decade.

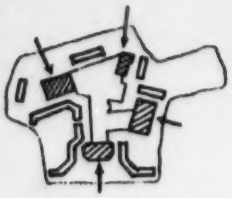
In order to make the village concept viable, it would be desirable to open the mall on a twenty-four hour a day basis. What have in the past been regarded as private thoroughfares will now require continuous public access. This will present security and liability problems that will have to be addressed.

At present the mall site is automobile oriented. Vast unbroken expanses of asphalt surround the building. Access routes to the buildings are not conducive to pedestrian traffic. Links to transit are difficult and the GO station is separated from the site by Highway 401. Furthermore, the building's scale, design, and materials present a stark facade from the street.

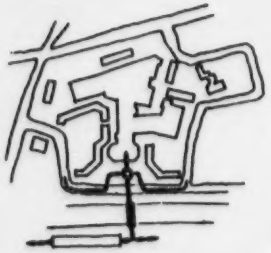
Pickering Town Centre



ARTIST'S CONCEPT



REINFORCING EXISTING MAJCR ANCHOR TENANTS



TRANSIT HUB

PEDESTRIAN PUBLIC PLAZA

Major tenants such as Eatons usually have long leases (e.g., 70 years). Although land is not severed, major tenants are guaranteed a large number of parking spots immediately in front of their stores for use by costumers. They usually secure in their leases vertical and horizontal expansion rights. The leaseholders' right to "quiet enjoyment" would also be breached during construction of new structures.

Land severances must have street frontage which can be accommodated on the mall site. Underground parking, however, may be more difficult due to the multitude of easements and difficulties with security. Questions regarding the legal right to access would arise. Cases currently under appeal indicate the law is not settled on this issue.

A stormwater management system will need to be incorporated into the development to meet provincial water quality requirements.

Solution

Providing housing intensification by developing appropriate suburban malls into village centres.

Housing will be added on the parking lots adjacent to the existing mall structure while maintaining existing retail functions. This improves the situation of the existing business owners while achieving important social objectives.

By creating residential, retail and office spaces as well as other uses adjacent to the mall, comfortable linkages to the surrounding residential and commercial neighbourhoods are provided. The "village" is thereby linked to the neighbourhood.

A pedestrian main street through the centre of the mall is created by appropriate links to housing, transit, neighbourhood amenities, and newly developed green space. The pedestrian mall street can then remain open 24 hours.

This concept allows a rebalanced transportation network, more pedestrian friendly than the automobile and its parking lots. Specifically the pedestrian mainstreet ties directly into the commuter GO Train system via a retail bridge across Highway 401. Furthermore the local bus transit system is relocated to directly connect to this network.

SKYWAY PEDESTRIAN LINK

The non-profit mid-rise apartment buildings are intended to house singles and families and mid-rise condominiums are planned for seniors. Parking ratios were maintained by relocating significant portions below-grade.

The mall roof and new parking access is used to provide productive green space and water runoff control.

The highest standard of energy conservation will be used in the construction.

As well, provisions will be made for waste reduction, waste system segregation, and waste management facilities.

Green space is proposed over parking garages associated with new residential development.

Site Statistics

Total site area: 53 acres

Residential:

200 unit seniors condominium
280 unit singles co-op non profit
340 unit family co-op non profit
200 unit family co-op non profit
160 unit singles co-op non profit

Total 1,180 residential units.

Commercial: 20,000 square feet

Retail: Mall 840,381 square feet (gross) plus additional 10,000 square feet.

Downsview Plaza

Description

The 8.3-acre site is located north of Highway 401 at the intersection of Keele Street and Wilson Avenue, on the north-east corner. The area is characterized by 1950s style strip development with few pedestrian amenities. To the north of the site are medium to high density residential land uses, to the east are institutional uses (high schools, cemetery), to the south and west are commercial development and low to high density residential uses.

The strip of shops and services which make up Downsview Plaza stretches the length of the site, with parking facilities located in front. The pedestrian walkway is not enclosed. A second story of offices were added to one mid-point section of the plaza presumably in the 1980s. A gas station is at one end of the plaza, and a parkette borders the south-west corner.

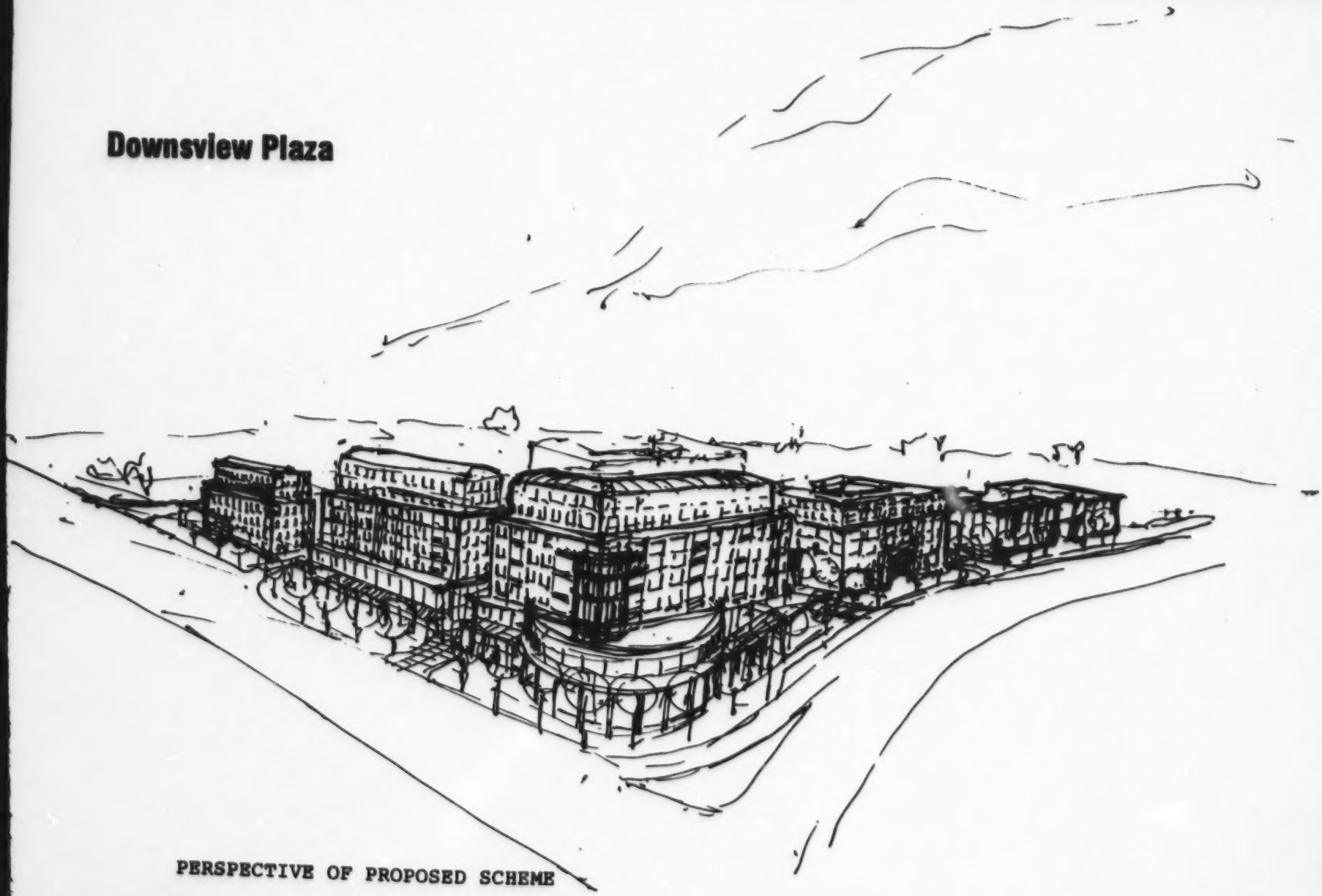
A consultant's report released in September 1989 explored the development possibilities in the Keele-Wilson area in light of the City of North York's sub-centres concept. Two major development constraints for the area were identified: limited traffic capacity and inadequate sewer capacity. The former results from limitations within the broader transportation network and means the area would be unable to support a significant increase in commercial development. The sewer system is strained due to the fact that the Metro's Black Creek sewer is operating at capacity. This problem may be rectified in 3 to 5 years. The consultant recommended that the City of North York put the secondary plan policies in place which would gradually lead to the creation of a sub-centre. The proposal called for medium density mixed commercial/residential development, with a maximum density of 2.5 fsi. Commercial density would be limited to 1.0 times the site area. The report also noted that the owner of the site had no apparent interest in redeveloping. The Planning Department's response to the report was to recommend that any additional density above 1.0 fsi or policies for a sub-centre would be premature until the transportation constraints were resolved.

Problems

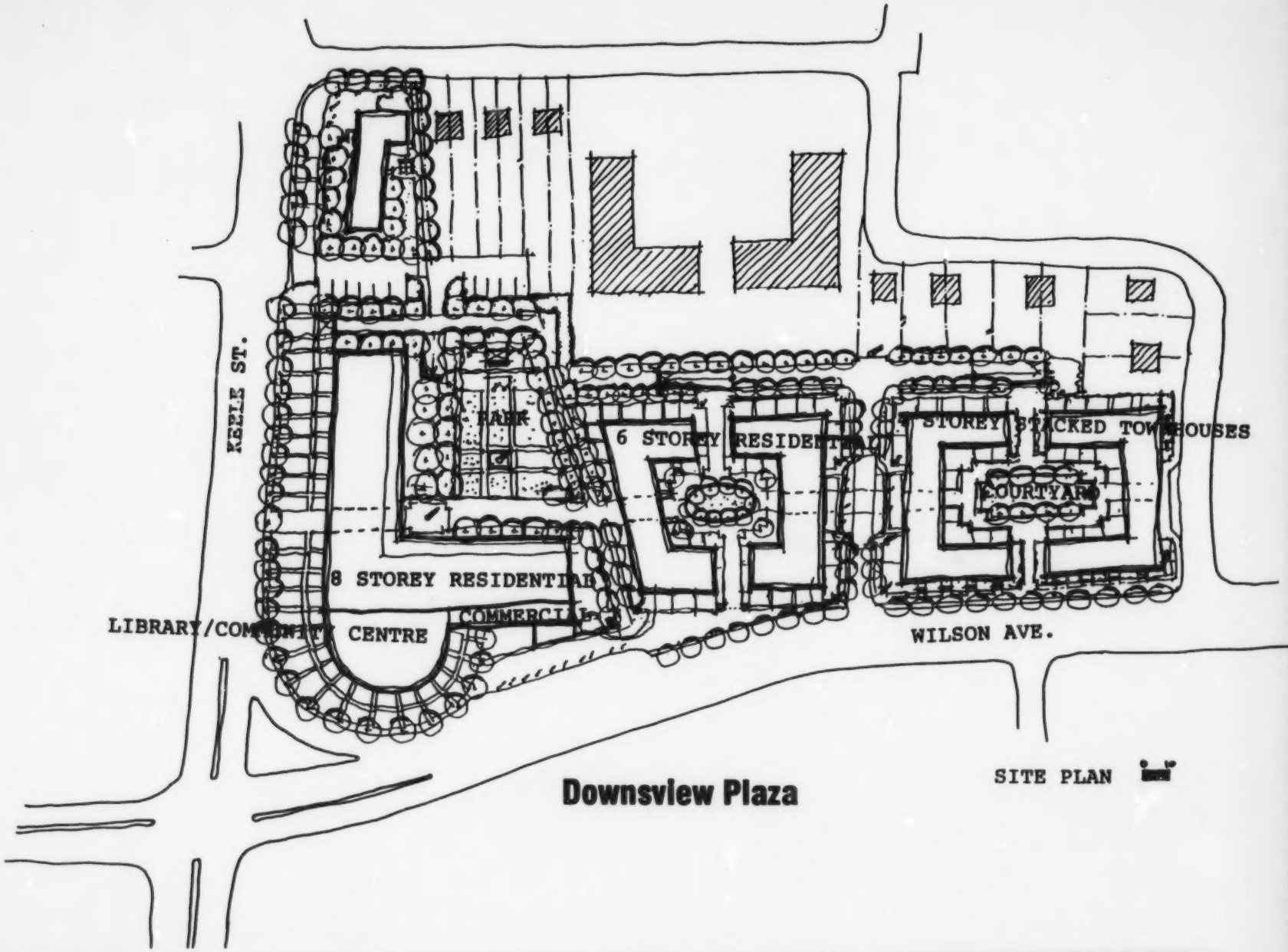
Traffic network and sewer capacity constraints were identified for the site. A new sewer proposed for Keele Street is proposed to supplement Metro's Black Creek trunk.

Access to Highway 404 via an interchange at Sheppard Avenue was presented as an option for diverting inter-regional through traffic away from the Keele-Wilson intersection.

Downsview Plaza



PERSPECTIVE OF PROPOSED SCHEME



Downsview Plaza

The suburban nature of the site which consists of fractured, coarse-grained, unintegrated bits and pieces, provides few contextual guideposts. The site is an 8.3 acre corner parcel that is part of a larger, long east-west oriented block.

Opportunities

The site is assumed to currently have essentially no book value, as there is no significant recent capital investment to be paid off. The current condition of the site is perceived to be of poor quality and occupied by commercial uses duplicated on several sites nearby. Although these functions may be convenient for local residents, they are not essential. The site could be completely redeveloped.

Intensification could put 600 - 800 units on the site as well as varying amounts of commercial space, while maintaining a mid-rise height and massing and densities of 1.5 to 2.0 times the lot area.

The adjacent public library site occupies 1.0 acre, and could potentially be included in an intensification strategy. The library could be relocated and its site redeveloped to further integrate compatible land uses into the proposal.

Intensification on the site can provide a context for future redevelopment of adjacent sites in the future.

The site can be broken down into smaller development parcels, or considered in one piece as it exists.

The site can accommodate a variety of housing types, a mix of residential and commercial uses, and significant open spaces.

The traffic island, with its mature trees, could be incorporated into the site and the existing planting relocated.

Environmental features can be incorporated into the development to enhance the local community and future residences.

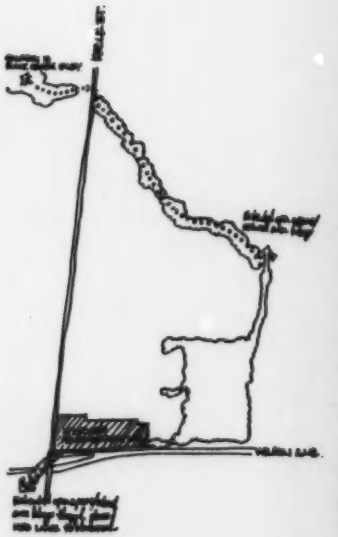
Green areas created on site will be linked to local and regional park and ravine systems.

Solution

The chosen solution fulfils the general goals of housing intensification and reurbanization. The *specific* solution chosen for the Downsview site illustrates principles that can be applied to similar sites elsewhere.

The proposal calls for demolition of the existing strip-retail use and adjacent open parking. This is no longer a defensible use of urban land and no acceptable scenario of adding to or adjusting the standing uses can be envisaged.

The neighbouring public library site has been included in the proposal, adding a use compatible with the housing and commercial functions.



LIBRARY/
COMMUNITY CENTRE

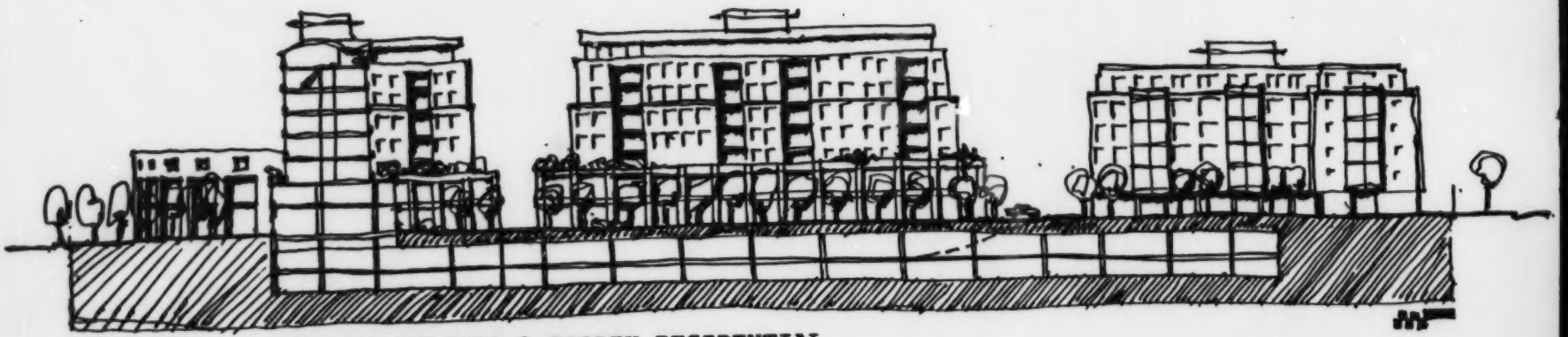
SECTION THROUGH 4 STOREY STACKED TOWNHOUSES

The concept provides for both stacked townhouses, mid-rise apartments and mixed-use buildings, which result in the potential for a variety of tenures, including market condominium and rental, co-operative, non-profit, seniors, family and singles.

The plan proposes a park that would be an added amenity for the immediate neighbourhood.

The solution avoids a massive megaproject approach. The site can be built in discrete parcels over a period of time and provide a variety of models for other sites nearby.

Current market value could be paid for the site and the proposed concept would be economically feasible with a coverage of less than 2.0.



SECTION THROUGH 8 STOREY RESIDENTIAL

In addition to 725 dwelling units, the site plan includes 80,000 s.f. of commercial and office space and 20,000 s.f. of community facilities (library, daycare).

Parking is virtually all underground on one or two levels. Enough parking could be constructed to satisfy current requirements or (preferably) to satisfy lower requirements in a less automobile-oriented city.

The concept creates an example of pedestrian-friendly development where none currently exists thereby establishing a precedent for improved standards for future projects.

While the proposal lessens local traffic problems by replacing an automobile-oriented use with more pedestrian-oriented uses, the implementation of such a scheme does little on its own to ameliorate the fragmented auto-dependent nature of the suburbs. Similar intensification elsewhere, accompanied by improved mass transit systems and linkages would however lead to a trend toward an improved urban environment overall.

The concept includes a proposal for a variety of interconnected new open spaces, linked to the street and also accessible through the new building blocks.

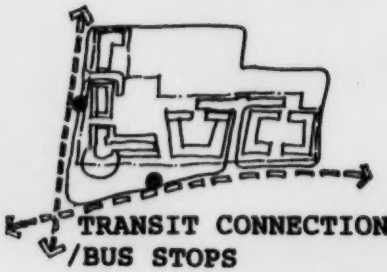
Design and construction will be consistent with the highest standards of energy conservation.

There will be flexibility in the design of open space to provide for storm water management.

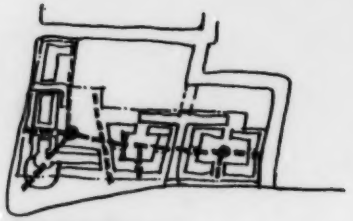
Waste management will be addressed through source separation and centralization of waste management facilities as well as on-site composting.

The system of physical and visual access to new internal green spaces improves the sense of safety and security of the buildings and the street, and also allows visual access to Wilson Avenue.

Provision is made for the internal pedestrian routes to link the site to the local community, major intersections, bus transits and the other amenities.



TRANSIT CONNECTIONS /BUS STOPS



PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

Notes

[1] Ontario Ministry of Treasury and Economics 1989. *Population Projections for Regional Municipalities, Counties and Districts of Ontario to 2011*; Ontario. Ministry of Community and Social Services 1989. *Looking Ahead: Trends and Implications in the Social Environment*.

[2] Ibid.

[3] For more details on these trends see Statistics Canada, *Canadian Social Trends*, unit 2 (1990).

[4] Metropolitan Toronto. Planning Department. *The GTA: Concepts for the Future* (1990), p. 12.

[5] Ontario. Ministry of Treasury and Economics. *Population Projections for Regional Municipalities, Counties and Districts of Ontario to 2011* (1989).

[6] Metropolitan Toronto. Planning Department. *The GTA: Concepts for the Future* (1990).

[7] IBI Group. *Greater Toronto Area Urban Structure Concepts Study*. Background Report No. 7, Comparison of Urban Structure Concepts, Exhibit 3.

[8] IBI Group. *Greater Toronto Area Urban Structure Concepts Study*. Background Report No. 7, Comparison of Urban Structure Concepts, Exhibit 3.

[9] Metropolitan Toronto. Planning Department, Policy Division, *Housing Intensification*, Policy Report no. 2 (1989).

[10] Ibid.

[11] Chrys Synyshyn, *Adaptive Reuse: A Literature Review*, Housing Conservation Unit, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (1985).

[12] See for a review of the literature until the early 1980s, David J. Hulchanski, *Making Better Use of the Existing Housing Stock: A Literature Review*. (Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 1982).

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This is a computerized database version of the annotated bibliographies on managing regional urban growth listed above (i.e., 90-1 and 90-2). The database is supplied with its own software to query and print documents in the database. The database will be updated annually at cost of $25 per year to continuing subscribers.

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The Republic of Turkey initiated a significant local government reform in the 1980s. As part of this reform, metropolitan governments were created in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and Adana based on the system in place in Toronto. This is a brief comparative study of the metropolitan governments of Istanbul and Toronto and the challenges that face them.

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90-7 Housing Two Million More in the Greater Toronto Area by 2021
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The product of a charrette—an architectural term referring to a study or a project performed within the framework of a tight deadline—organized by the Canadian Urban Institute. The charrette explored aspects of how the six million people anticipated in the Greater Toronto Area in 2021 (the present population is four million) might be housed without causing further urban sprawl. It brought together some ninety architects, planners, academics, and policy makers over three days to address issues of housing intensification and to develop specific proposals for possible application in the Greater Toronto Area.

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The proceedings of a symposium organized by the Canadian Urban Institute for the provincial government's Office of the Greater Toronto Area. It brought together academics, researchers, and policy-makers from Chicago, Frankfurt, Melbourne, Paris, the Randstad, and San Francisco to outline the challenges faced by their urban regions. Peter Hall delivered a keynote address that set an international context for dealing with the challenges of regional planning and management in the Greater Toronto Area.

90-10 Metro in Transition

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